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GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Ministerial Changes

Following the resignation of the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph, Bt, MP,[1] on 21 May, a number of new ministerial appointments have been made.

The new appointments to the Cabinet are as follows:

Secretary of State for Education and Science
Rt Hon Kenneth Baker, MP (former Secretary of State for the Environment)

Secretary of State for the Environment
Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley, MP (former Secretary of State for Transport)

Secretary of State for Transport
Rt Hon John Moore, MP (former Financial Secretary to the Treasury)

Other appointments are:

Ministry of Defence

Minister of State for Defence Procurement
The Lord Trefgarne (former Minister of State for Defence Support)

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Armed Forces)
Mr Roger Freeman, MP

HM Treasury

Financial Secretary
Mr Norman Lamont, MP (former Minister of State for Defence Procurement, Ministry of Defence)

The Cabinet

Following the new appointments, the composition of the Cabinet is as follows:

Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service
Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, FRS, MP

Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Lords
Rt Hon The Viscount Whitelaw, CH, MC

Lord Chancellor
Rt Hon the Lord Hailsham of Saint Marylebone, CH, FRS, DCL

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Minister of Overseas Development
Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC, MP

Chancellor of the Exchequer
Rt Hon Nigel Lawson, MP

Secretary of State for the Home Department
Rt Hon Douglas Hurd, CBE, MP

Secretary of State for Energy
Rt Hon Peter Walker, MBE, MP

Secretary of State for Defence
Rt Hon George Younger, TD, MP

Secretary of State for Wales
Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards, MP

Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Commons
Rt Hon John Biffen, MP

Secretary of State for Social Services
Rt Hon Norman Fowler, MP

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Rt Hon Norman Tebbit, MP

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Rt Hon Tom King, MP

Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Rt Hon Michael Jopling, MP

Secretary of State for the Environment
Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley, MP

Secretary of State for Employment
Rt Hon The Lord Young of Graffham

Secretary of State for Education and Science
Rt Hon Kenneth Baker, MP

Paymaster General and Minister for Employment
Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke, QC, MP

Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Rt Hon John MacGregor, OBE, MP

Secretary of State for Scotland
Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind, QC, MP

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry
Rt Hon Paul Channon, MP

Secretary of State for Transport
Rt Hon John Moore, MP

For full list of government ministers, see *United Kingdom Government Ministers.* COI, No 61/86/2.

[1]It has been announced that Sir Keith is to be appointed a member of the Order of the Companions of Honour.

Family and Domestic Jurisdiction: New Proposals

A consultative paper examining the issues involved in setting up a unified jurisdiction in family and domestic matters in England and

Wales – a single 'family court' - was published on 13 May.[1] Following consideration of the public responses to this paper, the Government intends to publish a report later this year or in early 1987 on the feasibility of the main options for such a court and an assessment of their costs.

The Present Court Structure

At present jurisdiction in matrimonial and other family and domestic proceedings in England and Wales is exercised by the High Court, which sits in London and in 25 centres in the provinces, by the 300 or so county courts and by some 700 magistrates' courts. There are overlaps in jurisdiction and the powers and procedures of the different courts vary. There are 17 family division judges of the High Court and 17 registrars who are family law specialists; in the county courts there are 375 circuit judges who combine family business with other civil and also criminal cases, and 190 county court registrars who deal with the whole range of civil business in those courts; and there are some 10,000 magistrates who are members of domestic and juvenile panels and thus entitled to sit in domestic and juvenile court proceedings in the magistrates' courts. In 1984 some 145,000 couples with a total of 149,000 children were divorced. In all family and domestic proceedings taken together a total of 670,000 applications were presented to the courts, the cost of which in the High Court and the county courts in the financial year 1984-85 was £112 million.

The Consultation Paper

The Government states that under the present arrangements the fact that different proceedings concerning an individual family or child can progress simultaneously in different courts may cause confusion and result in inconsistency of approach. Other criticisms concern the procedures of the courts, the lack of specialist expertise among professional people involved and the absence of an overall, coherent framework for family proceedings.

The Government invites public comment on what it sees as the underlying issues in settling any new arrangements. These include the nature and functions of a family court and the extent of its jurisdiction, namely whether in addition to the family jurisdiction of the High Court and the county courts and the matrimonial jurisdiction of the magistrates' courts, the family court should absorb the jurisdiction of the juvenile court in care proceedings and criminal proceedings. Other issues include the composition of the bench; and the principles governing the distribution of business within a family court, namely whether different aspects of an individual case should – regardless of their particular difficulty – be dealt with by the same judge or bench of magistrates, or whether the more difficult and demanding issues should be dealt with by the senior judiciary. Also considered are the way in which the procedures of a family court would differ from those of existing courts; whether a family court would need its own specialist court welfare service; and whether it should use existing courtroom accommodation and how it could be made geographically accessible, particularly for those people who might require emergency orders, as, for example, in cases of domestic violence.

The paper illustrates three options for change, outlining briefly the resource implications of each, and invites the public's views on them. They are: keeping the existing court structure but with a revised distribution of jurisdiction to end overlap and duplication; creating a unified court within the present High Court and county court structure; or creating a new court separate from the present courts with its own distinct structure and judiciary.

In seeking the views of interested parties and the general public, the Government asks respondents not only to comment on the advantages of their preferred course but also to identify and discuss the resources likely to be needed for it. It points out that successive governments have taken the view that a family court would require additional public resources which could not be found within prevailing levels and priorities for public expenditure and considers that such questions of resource availability and allocation of priorities remain central to the issue.

[1] *Interdepartmental Review of Family and Domestic Jurisdiction. A Consultation Paper.* Available from the Lord Chancellor's Department, Room 604, Neville House, Page Street, London SW1P 4LS. £2.

Shorter Note

TELEVISING HOUSE OF LORDS PROCEEDINGS

After a debate on 12 May on the report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Televising the Proceedings of the House (see p 170), the House of Lords has agreed, without a vote, to the continued public televising of its proceedings, originally introduced for an experimental period in January 1985 (see p 431, 1984). At the same time it has agreed to set up a Select Committee to monitor and supervise both sound broadcasting and television from the House, replacing the existing Select Committee on Sound Broadcasting established in 1978.

During the debate, the Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Lords, Viscount Whitelaw, said that he had always favoured televising Parliament and nothing in the 15 months of the experiment had changed that view. Should the televising of proceedings become permanent, he hoped that there would be opportunities to televise more of the select committees which he considered a very valuable part of the work of the House. At the same time Lord Whitelaw stressed the Lords' right to discontinue its broadcasting arrangements at any time. He said that no extra money would be provided by the Government towards the cost of televising the proceedings (at present borne by the broadcasting authorities). Referring to the new Select Committee on Sound Broadcasting and Television, Lord Whitelaw said that it would keep a close watch on the political balance of the programmes and would encourage facilities for regional broadcasts.

Source: *Hansard* (*HL*), Vol 474, No 90, cols 963-74 and 977-1005, and Vol 474, No 93, cols 1278-9.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

Britain's Defence Policy

Britain's defence estimates for 1986-87 will be nearly £18,500 million, a 20 per cent increase in real terms since 1979 and greater in absolute terms than that of any other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) country except the United States. These estimates, outlined in the 1986 defence White Paper, published on 12 May, are the first following the ending of the British commitment to the NATO real growth target in the period 1977-78 to 1985-86. They seek to consolidate the substantial improvements in defence capabilities made during that period.

The Strategic Context

The White Paper[1] considers that 1985 was a successful year for the security policies of Britain and its NATO allies. The Soviet Union returned to the arms control negotiating table in response to the clear strength and cohesion of NATO (see pp 12-13, 1985), while the November 1985 meeting between the United States President, Mr Ronald Reagan, and the Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev (see pp 376-8, 1985), had established a measure of confidence and greater understanding between the two leaders and produced specific results, including agreement to institute regular summit meetings and exchanges on regional issues, the commitment to make progress in arms control, and steps to increase East-West contacts. While the Geneva summit was an encouraging sign of a new readiness on the part of the Soviet leadership to discuss international problems, an underlying continuity in Soviet behaviour remained, based on Marxist-Leninist ideology, including the belief that communism would ultimately triumph over capitalism, which had not fundamentally changed since 1917. Because of the advent of nuclear weapons, however, Soviet leaders no longer regarded war with the West as inevitable, and it was on this recognition that the West had to seek constantly to build.

The Soviet Challenge

Against this background, the Soviet Union had attempted to improve its political status and to extend its influence on a basis of ever increasing military power by maintaining some 5 million troops (more than half of whom faced western Europe) and producing more armaments than all the NATO countries combined. It had developed a massive armoury of chemical weapons which was quite unmatched in the West, possessed the largest airforce in the world and had expanded its navy in the last 20 years from a coastal force to one capable of projecting power world-wide. Most significantly, it had undertaken a sustained drive to surpass the West in nuclear weapons, bringing into service in the last year the SS25 mobile intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), another Typhoon submarine with SSN20 missiles, more strategic bombers carrying cruise missiles, and more SS20 launchers. Ground force enhancements had included self-propelled artillery and surface-to-air missiles, the deployment of the latest T80 tank and the Fulcrum fighter aircraft, and the construction of a new large aircraft carrier. After a period of relatively slow growth in the 1970s and the early 1980s, Soviet military expenditure was showing more substantial increases and this higher rate was likely to be sustained at least to the end of the decade.

The challenge for NATO was not simply military, the White Paper says. Soviet leaders had taken to every means available to further Soviet aims, to weaken the cohesion of NATO, to foster misleading impressions of Soviet intentions and to channel criticisms of Western governments into directions that suited Soviet purposes, notably the intensified efforts to drive wedges between the United States and the NATO countries of western Europe.

Outside Europe, despite its setback in its occupation of Afghanistan (see pp 15-16, 1985) and the failure of its economy to provide a suitable model for the developing countries or to supply aid on a scale that matched the West's, the Soviet Union nevertheless continued to seek to extend its influence world-wide. Its preferred techniques included the provision of arms and military training, the use of allies and surrogates such as the Cubans in Africa, the Caribbean and central America, and the active encouragement of disruptive elements in Third World states. There was sufficient evidence of Soviet ruthlessness to justify a permanent degree of Western caution. The Western allies, the White Paper states, 'fully accept the Soviet Union's right to protect its legitimate security interests; but Soviet objectives have all too often been pursued to the detriment of the security and way of life of others . . . That is why, whether Soviet actions are interpreted as bridgeheads in a communist crusade or as a search for security, it is essential that we and our allies continue to provide an adequate political and military counter-weight to Soviet nuclear and conventional strength. Only in this way can we be certain of protecting the freedom and lifestyle that we have chosen. At the same time, we must seek to develop a dialogue which, over a period of time, could provide a foundation for security at lower levels of forces on both sides.'

[1] *Statement on the Defence Estimates 1986.* Vol. 1. Cmnd 9763-I. HMSO, £4·80. ISBN 0 10 197630 5. Vol 2. (Defence Statistics.) Cmnd 9763-II. HMSO, £5·30. ISBN 0 10 197631 3.

Although in peacetime the Soviet Union had a cautious leadership and opportunities to increase Soviet influence would be exploited only if the risks were not too great, the task of the NATO allies was to ensure that the Soviet Union was not given such risk-free opportunities. NATO's strategy of flexible response and forward defence would continue to provide a sound basis for meeting the Alliance's requirements for many years ahead, its aim being to prevent both conventional and nuclear war.

Military Forces

The available information, the White Paper indicates, suggested that in strategic nuclear forces the United States probably continued to have an advantage in warhead numbers (about 11,000, compared with 10,000 for the Soviet Union). Much of the Soviet force, however, consisted of ICBMs, giving it a significant advantage in missile warheads, in particular ICBM warheads, of which it had three times as many as the United States. Because the Soviet Union had so many large land-based missiles, it also had about three times as much missile throw-weight as the United States – about 5,900 tonnes compared with 1,900 tonnes. The Soviet Union therefore had the potential to destroy all United States land-based missiles while keeping part of its own ICBM force in reserve. With less than one-quarter of its warheads on ICBMs, the United States was unable to pose the same threat to Soviet missiles. About half the United States warheads were on sea-launched ballistic missiles which, although more survivable, were less accurate than most Soviet land-based systems; it also had a high proportion of its warheads on aircraft, which were generally more vulnerable than missiles.

In the past year the Soviet Union had begun to deploy a mobile ICBM (the SS25) and was continuing to develop another which was probably rail-mobile and which had multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs). Two types of submarine capable of carrying sea-launched ballistic missiles were on sea trials and a new bomber, carrying air-launched cruise missiles, continued to be deployed. A sea-launched cruise missile was also under development. The United States, too, was modernising its strategic forces, including the deployment of MX ICBMs in existing silos, the procurement of 100 B1 bombers and the development of the Trident D5 sea-launched ballistic missile. Bombers had also been equipped with air-launched cruise missiles, and an advanced cruise missile was under development. Sea-launched cruise missiles were being deployed on a variety of surface ships and submarines. In the long term the United States was planning a small single-warhead ICBM and an advanced-technology bomber.

The Soviet Union also had more longer-range intermediate forces in Europe – 350 aircraft and 390 missiles (including 270 SS20 missiles, each with three warheads), as opposed to NATO's 150 aircraft and 236 missiles. The same was true with respect to all shorter-range nuclear systems.

On the central front in Europe the current balance of conventional forces showed a superiority in favour of the Warsaw Pact which had 735,000 soldiers in fighting units, 16,600 main battle tanks, 10,800 anti-tank guided weapons, 8,800 artillery and 2,650 fixed-wing tactical aircraft: in contrast NATO had 580,000 soldiers in fighting units, 7,800 main battle tanks, 7,100 anti-tank guided weapons, 3,000 artillery and 1,250 fixed-wing aircraft. The Warsaw Pact was also better placed geographically to move additional forces to the front line and to sustain them since most of NATO's additional reinforcements of men and equipment would have to be moved across the Atlantic from North America.

The Soviet Union was capable of engaging in chemical warfare on a very large scale since it had produced and stockpiled a variety of types of chemical weapons and an estimated 300,000 tonnes of nerve agent alone. It also had specialist troops and means of delivering chemical attacks by land- and sea-based systems and from missiles and bombs. Among the NATO allies, only the United States possessed chemical weapons and it had produced none since 1969. In June 1985 a Chemical Warfare Review Commission had concluded that modernisation of the United States chemical warfare stockpile would be more likely to encourage negotiations for a comprehensive ban rather than to hinder them and that the ability to retaliate in kind was necessary to deter the Warsaw Pact from using chemical weapons. In December 1985 the United States Congress had approved funding in 1986 for the production, but not final assembly, of new binary chemical weapons, subject to a number of conditions, including the requirement that the United States should consult other NATO nations about its intentions.

Arms Control

Arms control was an integral part of the East-West relationship and Britain, the White Paper emphasises, remained firmly committed to achieving results in the talks currently in progress.

Nuclear Weapons

In the United States-Soviet talks on nuclear and space weapons (see p 87), the agreed aim was to work out effective arrangements for preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth, for limiting and reducing nuclear arms and for strengthening strategic stability.

At the end of September 1985, the White Paper notes, the Soviet Union had tabled specific proposals for the first time, these including a proposed reduction of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles by 50 per cent, a 6,000 limit on nuclear bombs and warheads, and, of all the bombs and warheads possessed by each side, a limit of 60 per cent on the number that could be carried on any one type of vehicle (ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles or aircraft). Although this tabling of specific numbers had been welcome, many elements of the Soviet proposals had been one-sided, since the Soviet definition of 'strategic' systems as those weapons capable of hitting the other side's territory meant that United States medium-range missiles and aircraft and carrier-borne aircraft were included and a large number of comparable Soviet systems were not. 'This was clearly unacceptable to the United States, since it would have involved agreeing to United States inferiority in INF [intermediate-range nuclear forces] or strategic systems, or both.'

On intermediate-range nuclear forces, the Soviet Union had proposed a halt to United States INF deployments, the elimination of Pershing II missiles, and reductions to 100-200 United States ground-launched cruise missiles over an 18-month period, and

to zero in a subsequent phase. In return the Soviet Union offered to reduce its SS20 missiles in eastern Europe to a level equivalent to the combined total of United States ground-launched cruise missiles and British-French strategic nuclear weapons. These proposals, says the White Paper, were essentially 'no more than a variation of the familiar Soviet insistence on matching SS20s against the British and French deterrents in the INF negotiations'. NATO's position throughout had been that the negotiations were bilateral between the United States and the Soviet Union and that INF systems on one side should be matched against INF systems on the other. The British deterrent, being seaborne, strategic and national, had no place in these negotiations and neither did the French deterrent. The Soviet proposals had, however, shown acceptance that an interim INF agreement could be reached independently of the space and strategic areas; they also implied an acceptance of some level of United States INF deployments, at least on a temporary basis.

Following consultations with its allies, the United States tabled further proposals in early November 1985. These included an endorsement of the principle of 50 per cent reductions in strategic forces; specific proposals for reductions in launcher numbers; a limit of 4,500 on ballistic missile warheads and of 1,500 on air-launched cruise missiles; and a limit on ballistic missile throw-weight. With regard to intermediate nuclear forces, the United States made specific proposals for an interim agreement with a limit of 140 United States and Soviet long-range INF launchers in Europe and warhead levels of perhaps 420 to 450. There would be proportionate reductions of SS20s in Asia and an agreed global long-range INF warhead limit. The British Government had welcomed this move which had demonstrated the United States commitment to pursuing agreement at the negotiating table.

Further Soviet proposals in January 1986 included a wide-ranging nuclear disarmament programme. This contained some important new features but also a number of familiar elements which, if agreed, would have allowed the Soviet Union to maintain its nuclear superiority in the short term and increase the significance of its conventional superiority in the long term. The Soviet proposal to eliminate United States and Soviet medium-range missiles in the 'European zone' had been linked to provisions that the United States would not supply strategic and medium-range missiles to other countries and that Britain and France would not build up their corresponding nuclear armaments.

After close consultation with its allies, the United States responded in February by proposing a three-phase reduction in long-range INF missiles which would eliminate such weapons world-wide by the end of the decade, coupled with limitations on shorter-range systems. Whereas the Soviet offer would have allowed the Soviet Union to retain a mobile SS20 force in Asia and build up shorter-range forces targeted on western Europe, the United States proposals offered a realistic basis for removing the threat from long-range INF missiles in a way that was consistent with the maintenance of Alliance security.

In accordance with agreed NATO policy, the United States had also firmly rejected constraints on British and French nuclear forces as a precondition for an INF agreement.

Britain's Position

In Britain's view, the White Paper explains, nuclear weapons at present made an essential contribution to preserving peace and security and East and West would continue to rely on them in their deterrent role for the foreseeable future. The White Paper adds: 'This does not mean that nuclear weapons cannot be reduced, but security at lower levels of armaments depends on realistic arms control measures which are balanced and verifiable.' Britain had suggested to the Soviet Union that there should be thorough negotiation on strategic arms proceeding from the United States proposals of November 1985, on space and strategic defence based on the four points agreed between the United States and Britain (see pp 11-12, 1985), and on INF on the basis of the February 1986 United States proposals which had the full support of the British Government. The conditions specified by the Soviet Union in relation to British nuclear forces were unreasonable and unacceptable since they sought to prevent the modernisation of Britain's independent strategic deterrent as a precondition for a bilateral United States-Soviet agreement concerning quite different nuclear forces. Britain had informed the Soviet Government that the British force was strategic in character and was the minimum size consistent with its role as a deterrent. The White Paper states: 'If Soviet and United States strategic arsenals were to be very substantially reduced, and if no significant changes occurred in Soviet defensive capabilities, we would want to review our position and to consider how best we could contribute to arms control in the light of the reduced threat.'

Nuclear Testing

The British Government was also committed to making progress towards a comprehensive nuclear test ban. Important verification problems remained to be solved and solutions to these needed to be more visible before negotiations could be resumed. Britain was working to resolve these at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and in July 1985 had tabled a paper on seismological verification of a comprehensive test ban (pp 229-30, 1985). Because of Soviet tactics, it had not yet proved possible to secure agreement for a working body of the Conference to resume work on this subject.

In September 1984 the United States had proposed to the Soviet Union that the two sides should exchange observers at their nuclear test sites to help resolve uncertainties over the monitoring of nuclear tests. Although the Soviet Union had not agreed, the United States in July 1985 invited Soviet observers to the United States test site for the same purpose, but the Soviet response was dismissive. In late July 1985 the Soviet Union announced a nuclear testing moratorium to run from the beginning of August until the end of 1985 and subsequently announced a number of extensions. The White Paper says: 'Such a moratorium is not verifiable, and previous Western experience of Soviet behaviour under a pause in testing gives no ground for believing that it would serve our security interests. In contrast, President Reagan's proposal in December 1985 that United States and Soviet experts should meet to discuss verification, and his offer in mid-March 1986 for Soviet observers to inspect a United States test, are practical measures,

designed to make realistic progress where it is possible.'

Conventional Arms

Security and stability, the White Paper points out, depend also on the balance of conventional forces between East and West. The greatest concentration of conventional forces anywhere in the world was in central Europe. At the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions talks in Vienna, Britain and its NATO allies were continuing to seek agreement on balanced and verifiable troop reductions that would enhance stability and security at lower levels of forces. Agreement was needed both on the number of troops in the reductions area and on measures to ensure that once withdrawn they could not subsequently be reintroduced without the knowledge of the other side. So far, however, the Soviet Union and its allies on these and other issues had shown no willingness to enter into serious negotiations.

In December 1985 Britain had tabled a new proposal on behalf of the NATO participants which sought to build on areas of agreement between the two sides. Under this proposal, initial reductions of 5,000 United States and 11,500 Soviet troops would be followed by an exchange of information on forces remaining in the reductions area and a three-year commitment not to increase them. During this period confirmation of compliance with the terms of the agreement and confidence in the accuracy of the information exchanged would be established by a range of verification measures. In its response in February, the East made no corresponding move and confined itself to a restatement of earlier and inadequate verification proposals.

Chemical Weapons

Noting that the 40-nation Conference on Disarmament in Geneva covered a wide range of issues, the White Paper says that none was more important to Britain's security than the negotiations on a comprehensive and verifiable global ban on the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. Although some progress had been made towards drafting a convention, major problems remained over verification. As in other arms control negotiations, the parties to an agreement had to be able to satisfy themselves that others were complying with obligations to destroy all chemical weapons and never to manufacture them again. Britain had tabled a number of working papers (see p 376, footnote 1, 1985) and in February 1986 had assumed the chairmanship of the *ad hoc* committee on chemical weapons. The Government hoped that this would enable Britain to provide an added impetus to reaching an agreement that would eliminate the threat posed by these weapons. The White Paper adds: 'If no agreement is forthcoming in Geneva, the United States may resume the production of chemical weapons, which it suspended unilaterally in 1969, in order to ensure that it continues to have a credible deterrent against Soviet use of its massive chemical weapons stockpile.'

The use of chemical weapons in the war between Iraq and Iran illustrated the danger posed by the proliferation of these weapons in the Third World (see p 89). In an attempt to make proliferation more difficult, Britain had imposed export controls on a range of chemicals that could be used to manufacture chemical weapons. These measures, however, were no substitute for the negotiation of a global ban which was the only long-term solution to the problem.

Confidence-building Measures

A climate of confidence and trust, the White Paper points out, was essential if real progress towards disarmament was to be made. In an attempt to create greater openness and to reduce the risks of a misunderstanding leading to conflict, the 35 participating states at the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) had agreed to notify one another in advance of all military activities involving more than 25,000 men. They had also undertaken, voluntarily and on a reciprocal basis, to invite observers to military manoeuvres. Britain had adhered to both the spirit and the letter of the Helsinki Final Act and had invited observers to every exercise that had taken place above this threshold.

The Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE), meeting in Stockholm, was seeking to extend the scope of the Helsinki Final Act and reduce still further the risk of military confrontation. In 1984 the West had tabled proposals providing for exchange of information on the structure and organisation of military forces in the CDE zone (Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals); forecasting and subsequent formal notification of military activities at a level significantly lower than 25,000; mandatory invitation of observers to demonstrate the non-threatening nature of these activities; compliance and verification arrangements, including occasional inspections; and improvement of contacts and communication between participating states.

Proposals tabled by the Warsaw Pact had been confined for the most part to declaratory measures that would do little to enhance either confidence or security, while those put forward by the group of neutral and non-aligned countries were closer to the NATO proposals. Britain would continue to work for early agreement on practical measures in time for progress to be reviewed at the Vienna CSCE Review Conference in November.

Britain, Europe and NATO

The security of Britain was inseparable from that of its NATO allies, the White Paper continues. Successive British governments had recognised that the Alliance, whose treaty enshrined the principle that an attack on one was considered an attack on all, provided the best guarantee of security for Britain, and had reaffirmed their commitment to collective defence. Crucial also to the Alliance was the transatlantic relationship, for there was no substitute for the commitment and contribution to collective security represented by the presence of substantial United States and Canadian forces on European soil. At the same time the European allies collectively provided the major part of ready forces stationed in Europe and of the warships in Atlantic and European waters. Britain formed a vital part of this European pillar and, in addition to defending its home base, maintained substantial ground and air forces in central Europe, provided the largest European naval contribution to the Eastern Atlantic and Channel, supplied specialist reinforcement forces (in particular for

NATO's northern flank) and made available facilities and support to North American forces.[1]

British policy was to strengthen further the European pillar of the Alliance by both bilateral and multilateral defence co-operation through organisations such as the Independent European Programme Group (IEPG), where during 1985 a particular effort had been made to strengthen equipment collaboration; NATO's Eurogroup, which discussed defence and security issues; and the reactivated Western European Union, which provided a unique forum for bringing together foreign and defence ministers of seven European states to discuss political and strategic issues (see pp 402-4, 1984). In addition, heads of Government of the European Community had agreed in December 1985 on the principles of the new Treaty on European Political Co-operation, one of which required member countries to co-ordinate the political and economic aspects of security (see p 6).

The thrust towards European collaboration came both from pressure from the United States for Europe to make a greater, and more co-ordinated, contribution to the common defence, and from the growing recognition within Europe that a stronger and more cohesive European effort would strengthen the Alliance as a whole by reducing wasteful duplication of effort, increasing standardisation and enhancing the strength of the European defence industrial base. In the IEPG substantial progress had been recorded in three areas: the harmonisation of requirements, including agreement on five outline staff targets (the first in the history of the group); collaborative research where discussions were taking place on a range of potential technological projects; and a study on improving the competitiveness of the European armaments industry.

'These efforts to improve collaboration', the White Paper points out, '. . . are not an alternative to transatlantic co-operation but, on the contrary, enable Europe to co-operate more effectively on an equal footing with the United States.' Although the process of collaboration was a long one – as much as 15 years from conception to entry into service of a major item of equipment – there had been a large number of successful projects as well as others in hand (for example, the agreement between Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Spain to proceed with a study for a European fighter aircraft; the development of the Anglo-Italian EH101 anti-submarine warfare helicopter; and feasibility studies for a NATO helicopter for the 1990s by Britain, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and the Netherlands).

During 1985 there had also been useful progress in equipment collaboration between the European and North American countries of the Alliance, including the entering into service of the United States version of the Harrier aircraft, jointly developed between Britain and the United States, and the production of the British version of the aircraft, the Harrier GR5, which was expected to enter service in 1988. In addition, the United States and Canada were collaborating with Britain and five other European allies in a feasibility study for a NATO frigate replacement, which was completed in 1985.

NATO Defence Planning

Further significant steps had been taken in 1985 to improve NATO's conventional defences. A report on conventional defence improvements, endorsed by NATO in May 1985, had identified key deficiencies and had emphasised the need to acquire more ammunition stocks, to exploit advanced emerging technologies and to place more emphasis on longer-term and co-ordinated planning. Other work under way included steady modernisation of equipment. In addition, following the 1984 decision to double the NATO infrastructure budget and to increase the number of hardened aircraft shelters, plans were well advanced to increase the pace at which such projects could be completed.

NATO remained committed to the maintenance of a full range of nuclear forces to contribute to deterrence. In the absence of an effective arms control agreement, the Alliance had continued the modernisation of its longer-range intermediate nuclear forces in accordance with its 1979 decision (see pp 13-14, 1980) through the deployment of United States Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe. The operational deployment of 108 Pershing missiles in the Federal Republic of Germany had been completed, as had six flights of cruise missiles (a total of 96) at Greenham Common in Britain. Deployments of cruise missiles in Italy had begun in 1984 and in Belgium in March 1985, and in November 1985 the Netherlands Government had decided to proceed with the deployment of such missiles on its territory.

The Alliance was also pursuing its 1983 decision to reduce the stockpile of nuclear warheads by 2,400 while at the same time ensuring the continuing effectiveness and survivability of the remaining stockpile.

Beyond the NATO Area

Although the commitment to NATO lay at the heart of its defence policy, Britain also had formal responsibilities for the defence of its remaining dependencies and had world-wide political and economic links. Britain's wider activities made their own contribution to the security interests of the Alliance, for its out-of-area capabilities provided protection not only against threats to British national interests but also against challenges to the security of the West as a whole.

Britain's main overseas presence was in the Falkland Islands, Hong Kong, Belize, Brunei and Cyprus. The Falklands garrison reflected the continuing need for a military presence sufficient to deter aggression and to defend the islands against attack. The recently opened airport at Mount Pleasant would enable Britain to reinforce the garrison if necessary, while also allowing further reduction of troops without diminishing the ability to defend the Islands. Until 1997 Britain would also be responsible for Hong Kong's defence and internal security and would maintain the necessary forces there. There were also British forces in independent Belize and Brunei which were present at the request of the governments there to help safeguard their security, while other British forces at the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus were playing important roles in supporting peacekeeping operations in the region, particularly the United Nations forces in Cyprus

[1]The British contribution to the European share in the defence of the continent (excluding France and Spain which do not participate in NATO's military structure) includes all the aircraft carriers, 80 per cent of maritime aircraft, and 60 per cent of destroyers, frigates and conventional submarines; in central and northern Europe, Britain supplies 15 per cent of the main battle tanks, 25 per cent of anti-tank guided weapons, 45 per cent of air defence aircraft and 30 per cent of ground attack aircraft, and a quarter of all manpower (active duty personnel).

and Lebanon and the multinational force and observers in Sinai.

An important element in promoting regional stability was the wide range of military assistance programmes run by Britain aimed at helping friendly nations to maintain effective defence forces. Not only did these foster good relations with the countries involved, they also contributed to an improved climate of regional security from which Britain derived other direct and indirect benefits. In 1985 nearly 700 British servicemen were loaned to countries outside NATO, and nearly 4,000 non-NATO overseas students were trained at military establishments in Britain.

Roles, Forces and Equipment

The White Paper sets out the capabilities, structures and equipment programmes of Britain's armed forces and describes some of the ways in which British Services might have to be used in action, and the tactics they could employ. Since 1979 much new equipment had been ordered, including 5 nuclear-powered submarines, 4 diesel submarines, 9 frigates, 21 mine-countermeasures ships, 23 Sea Harriers and over 50 helicopters for the Navy; Challenger tanks to equip six regiments, Warrior (MVC80) and Saxon armoured vehicles to equip 23 battalions, multi-launched rocket systems for three regiments and six Rapier air-defence batteries for the Army; and 235 strike and air-defence Tornados and 62 offensive-support Harriers for the Royal Air Force. Since 1979 annual expenditure on defence equipment had risen by about 40 per cent in real terms, and in 1986-87, £8,250 million was planned to be spent on new equipment and on meeting related procurement costs, this representing about 45 per cent of the defence budget.

Nuclear Forces

All British nuclear forces were committed to NATO. Since 1969 the Royal Navy had maintained at least one nuclear-powered submarine armed with Polaris nuclear missiles on patrol at all times, providing the country with an independent strategic nuclear force of last resort and making a valuable contribution to the Alliance. In addition, there were nine Royal Air Force strike-attack squadrons of Tornado aircraft and two Buccaneer squadrons plus Sea Harrier aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons. The British army in the Federal Republic of Germany also operated one regiment of Lance surface-to-air missiles and five regiments of artillery capable of firing nuclear warheads supplied by the United States.

The progress of the Trident programme continued on schedule. Its estimated cost, which would absorb on average about 3 per cent of the total defence budget or 6 per cent of the equipment budget over the period of its procurement, was £9,870 million (at average 1985-86 prices and at an exchange rate of $1·28 to the pound), of which 55 per cent was expected to be spent in Britain.

Defence of Britain

The defence of Britain was more than just defending the British homeland, since Britain also served as a forward operating base for naval forces in the Eastern Atlantic and the North Sea, a main operating base for naval operations in the Channel, and a rear operating base for land and air forces deployed on the continent; in addition, Britain was essential for the safe and timely reinforcement and resupply of forces on the European mainland.

The naval contribution to Britain's defence lay partly in the deployment of surface ships and submarines in the Norwegian Sea and Eastern Atlantic, and partly in the defence of ports and anchorages. The White Paper also writes of the serious threat posed by modern mines to the movements of seaborne reinforcements or of British Polaris submarines, and the importance of denying enemy forces access to waters in which they could lay their mines and of appropriate mine-countermeasures vessels.

Over 100,000 ground forces were available for home defence, many with a direct operational role in guarding key points and as members of mobile reaction forces in time of tension or war. A significant proportion of these tasks would be undertaken by the Home Defence Force which was being expanded to 47 companies. In addition, six squadrons of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment provided ground defence at airfields, and three of the six new infantry battalions to be formed as part of the Territorial Army's expansion scheme would also have home defence roles. Other home defence forces being set up included an Army Air Corps squadron, equipped with Scout helicopters, to provide quick-response airborne reaction forces. In addition, up to 32,000 regular army reservists would be available in wartime.

The air defence of Britain, the responsibility of Royal Air Force Strike Command, comprised fighter, airborne early warning and tanker aircraft, as well as command and control systems, which were on a permanently high state of readiness. Close-range defence forces comprised surface-to-air Bloodhound and Rapier missiles and radar-controlled guns. The substantial programme of investment in air defence was continuing; the first 20 of the Tornado air-defence aircraft had been delivered and seven squadrons were planned. Sky Flash and Sidewinder missiles carried by these aircraft, and by two squadrons of Phantoms that would remain in service, were also being improved. Improvements to the Rapier missiles in service with the Royal Air Force Regiment were also being considered.

The European Mainland

British ground and air forces were stationed permanently on the European mainland in accordance with obligations under the Brussels Treaty.

The British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) had a peacetime strength of 55,000 but could be expanded to about 150,000 on mobilisation. It consisted of three armoured divisions stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany and an infantry division, based in Britain but which would be deployed to the Federal Republic in a period of tension. BAOR, with other NATO forces, was responsible for the defence of northern Germany and was itself responsible for 65 km in the centre of the front. The plans and concepts for the northern command had been revised and these developments were being matched by the introduction of new equipment, including more Challenger tanks and Warrior armoured personnel carriers, to enable armoured brigades to achieve greater mobility. This would be further facilitated by improvements to BAOR's artillery support, with the introduction in the early 1990s of the multi-launched rocket system, and the BATES computer-based artillery targeting system. In addition

a new air-defence regiment was being formed and the tracked Rapier missile introduced to improve the mobility of area air defence. Three of the six Territorial Army infantry battalions now being formed would also enhance the ability to reinforce BAOR. Other enhancements included five new Javelin-equipped air-defence batteries, a new armoured reconnaissance squadron, two Special Air Service squadrons and improved medical support.

Royal Air Force Germany operated from four airfields in northern Germany. Its air-defence forces comprised two Phantom and four Rapier squadrons, kept in a state of readiness in order to deter a surprise attack, while its offensive strike-attack capability was being enhanced with the deployment of Tornado GR1 aircraft, now being armed with the JP233 cratering and area-denial weapon; the Tornado would also be equipped with the air-launched anti-radiation missile (ALARM) when it comes into service. Other squadrons included a Jaguar squadron, which, although employed mainly for tactical reconnaissance tasks, could also be used for offensive operations; two Harrier GR3 squadrons – to be replaced later in the 1980s by the GR5 version – for close air support with BAOR but also for deeper interdiction sorties; and two support helicopter squadrons of Pumas and Chinooks, reinforced in war by helicopters from Britain. In addition there would be Hercules and VC10 aircraft that would play a major role in carrying troops from Britain to reinforce the Central Region, and British-based aircraft would operate against a hostile thrust into the region.

The British-Netherlands amphibious force was available to reinforce Norway, the Baltic approaches or certain Atlantic islands, and an infantry brigade and logistic support was earmarked for deployment in tension or war to reinforce either Denmark or Schleswig-Holstein. In addition, a force including an infantry battalion, artillery, helicopters and logistic support was available for reinforcement to either the northern or southern flanks of NATO; and air support was given to NATO's rapid reinforcement plan for the Northern Region.

A key role of British maritime forces in war would be to safeguard reinforcement and resupply routes through the Eastern Atlantic and Channel areas. The freedom to conduct maritime operations in these waters and in the Norwegian Sea, and the denial of that freedom to enemy forces, were essential to support the defence of Europe. The White Paper emphasises that the principal threat to the Atlantic routes would come from Soviet submarines armed with torpedoes, short-range missiles and long-range anti-ship missiles that required NATO to project a multi-layered anti-submarine defence over a huge area. The same principles would have to be applied in providing protection from attack by hostile surface vessels and from air attack.

Beyond the NATO Area

All British garrisons deployed outside the NATO area would need regular support by air or sea, including the need for rapid reinforcement in time of tension. The Royal Air Force's Air Transport Force provided airborne, transport and tanker roles, while the Royal Fleet Auxiliary had specialised tankers and ammunition and stores ships that allowed the Royal Navy to sustain operations world-wide without shore support. Additional tankers could also be taken up from trade, thereby extending substantially the endurance and range of naval task groups, as was demonstrated in the 1982 Falklands campaign. Planned improvements in Britain's capability to deploy forces out of the NATO area – accelerated by the events of 1982 – had been completed; with other recent improvements, Britain was now better able to launch a rapid and effective battalion-group parachute assault, if ever the need arose. The importance of being able to react rapidly to out-of-area crises was illustrated in January 1985 by the sudden need to evacuate British and other nationals from South Yemen following fighting in Aden, where HM Yacht *Britannia*, Royal Navy ships and other vessels were able to take off over 1,000 people (see p 42).

Finance and Management

The defence budget for 1986-87 will be nearly £18,500 million and will be higher in absolute terms than that of any other ally except the United States, and, although this budget would herald the end of Britain's commitment to the NATO real annual growth of 3 per cent in defence expenditure up to 1985-86, the planned estimates would seek to consolidate the substantial enhancements in defence capabilities achieved during the last seven years of real growth. At the same time, expenditure for the Falkland Islands would continue to fall significantly. Although the defence budget for 1986-87 and for the two subsequent years was planned to rise in cash terms, its value in real terms would decrease by about 6 per cent over the three-year period.

While the difficult decisions on spending priorities had to be taken, and the preservation of the front-line numbers had to be balanced against the need to invest in expensive new equipment which would strengthen further the services' fighting power, the White Paper states that there would be no need for any change in Britain's main defence posture. The Government was continuing to pursue efficiency and value for money in the management and organisation of the defence services.

Defence Exports

The export of defence equipment to friendly countries underlined British concern for their security, strengthened their ability to resist aggression and helped to protect Western interests. In addition, defence exports allowed the maintenance of a stronger defence industrial base than could be sustained by British requirements alone. In 1984 Britain increased its share of the world's defence market from 6 to nearly 8 per cent and maintained its position in the top three of the free world's largest defence exporters. New contracts recorded in 1984 amounted to £2,250 million; in 1985 substantial orders had been received for a number of items of British equipment including the first sales of the Tornado aircraft to three countries outside the partner countries.

Northern Ireland

Although the Services had been engaged in operations against terrorism in Northern Ireland for 16 years, the nature of their operations had now changed. Not only had the level of troops involved been reduced to around 9,500 in recent years (augmented by the nine

battalions of over 6,400 full- and part-time members of the Ulster Defence Regiment), but also they had been operating entirely in support of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. However, terrorism continued and there would be no quick solution. In early 1986 the Army had demonstrated its ability to respond rapidly to changes in the terrorist threat by deploying two further infantry battalions to the province. The security forces continued to keep up the pressure on the terrorists with steady success, although another six soldiers were killed in 1985, bringing the total number of such deaths since 1969 to 533.

Aid to the Civil Community

In Britain bomb disposal teams responded to 4,400 requests for assistance in 1985, nearly 4,000 involving the disposal of items of conventional munitions, many left over from the second world war, with the remainder concerning suspected terrorist devices. Royal Navy and Royal Air Force search and rescue services rescued more than 880 people.

In December 1985 the Services completed their relief effort in Ethiopia, during which Royal Air Force Hercules aircraft, assisted by army personnel, flew 2,152 sorties and delivered 32,000 tonnes of supplies from Addis Ababa and the port of Assab to areas of need within the country. Following the Mexican earthquake in September 1985 the Services swiftly mounted a relief mission in which a Royal Engineer team and a Royal Air Force detachment with Puma helicopters and a Hercules aircraft from Belize were sent to Mexico City to restore the vital nationwide telephone centre; another team of Royal Navy and civilian Fire Service rescue specialists, sent out from Britain with thermal imaging cameras capable of detecting the presence of trapped people, worked throughout the city helping in the search for survivors. Less than two months after the Mexican disaster, units from the Belize garrison assisted in relief operations in Colombia in the wake of a volcanic eruption, evacuating survivors and distributing food, medical supplies and equipment.

Personnel

The regular armed forces totalled 323,500 personnel in January 1986, of whom 68,200 were in the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines, 162,100 in the Army and 93,100 in the Royal Air Force. Reserve forces totalled 302,800, of whom 209,100 were regular reserves and 93,100 volunteer reserves and the auxiliary forces. Cadet forces numbered 144,700.

Since 1979 the number of civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence in Britain has been reduced by about 77,000 to 171,500. This included the 19,000 civilians employed by the Royal Ordnance Factories which became an independent company in January 1985. It is expected that civilian manpower employed by the Ministry of Defence will fall further to about 165,000 by the end of 1986-87.

ESSAY

The White Paper contains a number of essays on defence matters, one of which is summarised below.

Strategic Defence Initiative

Discussing the evolution of strategic offensive forces and strategic defences in an essay entitled 'The Strategic Defence Initiative', the White Paper states that, with the deployment in the 1950s of substantial nuclear weapons by both the United States and the Soviet Union, the principal question facing defence planners became how best to prevent a conflict in the first place since a nuclear war could not be won in the traditional sense. NATO countries' solution to this question was to have a defence structure designed not to attack its opponents but rather to deter possible aggression by being able to respond appropriately – and if necessary massively – to an attack.

Noting that the ballistic missile had confirmed the revolution in strategic thinking begun by the atomic bomb, the White Paper points out that in the 1960s the United States and the Soviet Union had both worked on the development of defensive systems against ballistic missiles. The United States, however, had concluded that such defences, given the available technology, were unlikely to be cost-effective, while the Soviet Union itself had recognised that it was not in its own interests to become engaged in a competition with the United States in this field. In the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty of 1972 and a protocol of 1974, both countries had therefore agreed not to develop or deploy defensive systems against ballistic missiles, although one geographically limited system had been allowed. The effect of the treaty had been to ensure that both powers remained open to ballistic missile attack by each other; they also had, because of the certainty of their mutual ability to retaliate during a conflict, an overwhelming incentive to refrain from attacking the other. (Later in the 1970s the United States ceased work on its ABM system. The Soviet Union, however, constructed its own system around Moscow and continued an extensive research programme into technologies relevant to defensive systems, including lasers and particle-beam, radio-frequency and kinetic-energy weapons.)

In 1983 the United States announced that it would initiate a research programme (Strategic Defence Initiative – SDI) designed to determine whether, and if so how, advanced technologies could offer the possibility of defence against ballistic missiles. If realised, the SDI would in the United States view provide the opportunity for both superpowers to shift the relative balance between defensive and offensive forces to a greater emphasis on defence, while at the same time strengthening deterrence and stability. The United States made it clear that any defensive system would have to meet strict criteria of survivability and cost-effectiveness, and that if these criteria were to be met, it would consult and negotiate with the Soviet Union under the terms of the ABM treaty with the aim of managing jointly a transition to a more defence-reliant balance of forces.

Britain's views on SDI research, the White Paper states, were governed by the Camp David accord reached in 1984 between the United States President and the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, in which they agreed that the aim of the United States and the West was not to achieve superiority but to maintain balance, taking account of Soviet developments; that SDI-related deployment would, in view of treaty obligations, have to be a matter for negotiation; that the overall aim was to enhance not undermine deterrence; and that East-West negotiations should aim to achieve security with reduced levels of offensive systems on both sides (see pp 11-12, 1985). The British Government supported the SDI research

programme since it was essential to Western security that the Soviet Union, which had its own research programme in defence technologies, did not gain a decisive unilateral advantage over the West in any particular capability.

Following an invitation by the United States in 1985 to its NATO allies and other countries to join in the SDI research, Britain and the United States reached agreement in December 1985 on a programme of information exchange, on the areas where British expertise would be relevant to the research, and on the mechanisms to facilitate co-operation. A memorandum of understanding was also signed safeguarding British interests in the ownership of intellectual property rights and in technology transfer, and providing consultative and review mechanisms. In addition a special office was set up in the Ministry of Defence to help British participation (see pp 9-10). This participation, the essay concludes, would enhance Britain's ability to sustain an effective national research capability in areas of high technology relevant to both defence and civilian programmes, and would open the way for research possibilities in other fields which Britain alone could not afford.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

At a meeting of the North Atlantic Council in May, member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) reaffirmed their willingness to co-operate with the countries of the Warsaw Pact in efforts to negotiate arms control agreements and other measures that would further a more constructive East-West relationship.

The Council was preceded by meetings of NATO's Defence Planning Committee and Nuclear Planning Group, and by a meeting of the Eurogroup.

NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

The following communiqué (with headings added) and the separate statement on conventional arms control were issued by the North Atlantic Council after its meeting in Halifax, Canada, on 29 and 30 May 1986.

Final Communiqué

East-West Relations

At Halifax, we have reviewed all aspects of East-West relations. We conclude that obstacles to agreement, however serious, should not prevent both sides from building on areas of common interest. We remain ready to co-operate where common ground exists. We will continue our efforts to narrow differences elsewhere.

We remain united in our resolve to maintain adequate forces and to seek a more constructive relationship with the countries of the East. However, the conventional imbalance in Europe and the sustained build-up and modernisation of all categories of Soviet military power continue to be of concern. In order to preserve peace and to prevent any kind of war, we will maintain the Alliance's strategy of deterrence.

Arms Control and Disarmament

We are determined to pursue our efforts for progress in arms control and disarmament. We aim at a lower and more balanced level of armaments. We support United States efforts to achieve deep reductions in Soviet and United States nuclear forces. We seek a treaty totally eliminating chemical weapons. Reductions in conventional forces are also crucial in order to correct the present conventional imbalance between the Alliance and the Warsaw Pact. Beyond this, we aim at conventional stability throughout Europe. We have today made a separate statement on conventional arms control [see below].

In all negotiating fora in which they are engaged, the participating Allies have presented detailed proposals directed at enhancing stability and security. We now await an equally constructive response at the negotiating table from the Soviet Union and the other members of the Warsaw Pact. Public statements alone are not enough.

Adequate verification measures are the key to progress in all the present negotiations and essential for building trust and openness. Any agreement should enhance confidence of compliance and strengthen the existing treaty regime. We are prepared to accept comprehensive verification measures, on a fully reciprocal basis, including systematic on-site inspections.

Other Elements in East-West Relations

But the development of peaceful and realistic East-West relations requires more than arms control. The human dimension remains crucial: this embraces respect for human rights and encouragement of individual contacts. Moreover, a more co-operative East-West relationship, including political dialogue, trade, and cultural exchanges, in which all states participate on equal terms, is needed.

Confidence and Security

We reaffirm the importance each of us attaches to the CSCE [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe] *process in all its aspects. At Stockholm we are pressing for agreement on a substantial set of confidence- and security-building measures by September 1986. We are determined to further the CSCE process at the Vienna CSCE follow-up meeting in November, which should be opened at a political level.*

Berlin. *We underline the importance of the continued observance of the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin and, particularly in view of the current situation, of maintaining freedom of circulation in the city.*

Terrorism. *Terrorism is a serious concern to us all. It poses an intolerable threat to our citizens and to the conduct of normal international relations. We are resolved to work together to eradicate this scourge. We urge closer international co-operation in this effort.*

European Dialogue. *The purpose of our Alliance is to enable our peoples to live in peace and freedom, free from any threat to their security. We seek a productive East-West dialogue. This will enhance stability in our relations with the members of the Warsaw Pact. We call upon the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European countries to join us in this endeavour.*

Halifax Statement on Conventional Arms Control

Within the Alliance, we cherish the ideal that all the peoples of Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, should live in peace, freedom and security. To achieve that ideal, bold new steps are required in the field of conventional arms control.

Our objective is the strengthening of stability and security in the whole of Europe, through increased openness and the establishment of a verifiable, comprehensive and stable balance of conventional forces at lower levels.

To work urgently towards the achievement of this objective we have decided to set up a high-level task force on conventional arms control.

It will build on the Western proposals at the CDE [Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe] *conference in Stockholm and at the MBFR* [Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions] *negotiations in Vienna, in both of which participating Allied countries are determined to achieve early agreement* [see p 376, 1985].

It will take account of Mr Gorbachev's statement of 18 April expressing, in particular, Soviet readiness to pursue conventional force reductions from the Atlantic to the Urals.[1]

An interim report will be presented to the Council in October, and a final report will be discussed at our next meeting in December.

Our aim is a radical improvement in East-West relations in which more confidence, greater openness, and increased security will benefit all.

DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Defence ministers of the Defence Planning Committee, the co-ordinating and decision-making body of the Alliance, met in Brussels on 22 May. In their communiqué, ministers, while stating that nuclear weapons were an essential component of NATO strategy, underlined their determination to avoid an undue reliance on their early use by making a special effort to improve NATO's conventional capabilities.

The conventional defence improvement plan, agreed by defence ministers in May 1985 (see pp 13-14 and 227, 1985), had been an important first step. Progress was already being made on, for example, improvements in plans aimed at increasing selected ammunition stocks. Other actions being taken included improvements in the sustainability of NATO forces; consideration of ways to enhance NATO's integrated air forces to deal with the Warsaw Pact air threat; the accelerated implementation of infrastructure projects, particularly reinforcement support facilities such as hardened aircraft shelters; the continued exploitation of emerging technologies; and the need to provide more assistance by more countries to Greece, Portugal and Turkey to help them overcome known deficiencies in their forces and to carry out their roles in NATO. Other measures included the more effective co-ordination of the various areas of planning within NATO.

Confirming the Alliance's objective of seeking balanced, equitable and effectively verifiable arms control agreements involving United States and Soviet nuclear forces, ministers welcomed the commitment of these countries to seek early progress in Geneva on areas of common ground, including 50 per cent reductions in offensive nuclear arms appropriately applied, and the idea of a separate intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) agreement. They expressed strong support for the United States' stance concerning intermediate-range, strategic and defence and space systems. Ministers also recognised that progress towards balanced and verifiable reductions of conventional forces in Europe (see p 376, 1985) would help strengthen peace and security in Europe, and expressed their hope that recent statements made by the Soviet Union on this subject would be transformed into deeds at the negotiating table. Ministers confirmed their resolve to seek an early conclusion of a world-wide chemical weapon ban, and called on the Soviet Union to take a more constructive attitude towards effective verification provisions. On the subject of terrorism, ministers urged closer international co-operation to eradicate the threat.[1]

NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP

Defence ministers of NATO earlier attended on 20 and 21 March a meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group in Wurzburg, Federal Republic of Germany. In their communiqué, they expressed their continued support for the efforts of the United States and Britain to maintain the effectiveness of their nuclear deterrent forces. Among the subjects discussed was up-to-date evidence on the Soviet Union's violations of arms control agreements such as the deployment of the SS25 intercontinental ballistic missile; ministers renewed their call to the Soviet leadership to take the necessary steps to ensure full compliance with arms control treaty commitments since a double standard would be unacceptable and would undermine the security of the Alliance.[2] They reaffirmed NATO's commitment to maintain a credible deterrent posture in view of the continued qualitative and quantitative advances in Soviet forces, including the deployment of SS23 shorter-range INF missiles, flight-testing of an improved version of the SS20 missile and the continued development of long-range cruise missiles. The policy of NATO, in contrast, was to maintain only the minimum number of nuclear weapons necessary for deterrence (see p 7).

[1]The statement by the Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, contained proposals for substantial reductions in land and tactical air forces of European countries and North American forces stationed in Europe and the disbandment or removal of tactical nuclear weapons deployed in an area from the Atlantic to the Urals, with possible national and international (such as on-site inspection) verification.

[1]Greece reserved its position on the INF and space system parts of the communiqué, Norway on defence and space systems, and Denmark on INF and defence and space systems.

[2]Announcing the dismantling of two Poseidon submarines in accordance with the terms of the unratified Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) II agreement, the United States President, Mr Ronald Reagan, warned the Soviet Union on 27 May that unless it complied with SALT II constraints the United States would, from November, have to determine the structure of its strategic nuclear forces in the light of the threat posed by Soviet strategic forces and not on the proposed standards contained in the SALT agreement, which Soviet non-compliance had undermined. The President, hoped, however, that the Soviet Union would 'use this time constructively'. Responding to questions in the House of Commons on 3 June (*Hansard*, Vol 98, No 121, cols 728-30), the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, said that she hoped the SALT II agreement would continue to be observed; the United States was complying with the agreement and the door was left open for the Soviet Union to do the same.

EUROGROUP

Defence ministers of the Eurogroup (Belgium, Britain, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Turkey) met in Brussels on 21 May 1986. In a communiqué, ministers agreed on the importance of improving the European contribution to the Alliance's conventional capabilities, while recognising that this was a serious challenge to countries, given the rising costs of defence equipment and the economic constraints they faced. Ministers therefore stressed their view that it was more important than ever to make better use of resources. This required greater co-operation across the whole range of military activities, especially in research, development and production, both within Europe and between Europe and North America. Since co-operative equipment projects were likely to be more successful if they were based on agreed operational concepts, ministers welcomed arrangements that had been made to develop closer working relations between Eurogroup and the Independent European Programme Group. They also expressed their view that there was a continuing need for Eurogroup to inform the North American public about the level and quality of the European contribution to the Alliance.

United Nations Special Session on Africa

The need to give high priority to Africa in the allocation of aid resources was reaffirmed by Britain at the United Nations General Assembly's Special Session on Africa which took place from 27 to 31 May.

Background

The special session followed the adoption in 1985 by the Organisation of African Unity of a priority programme for African economic recovery for the period from 1986 to 1990. Before the opening of the special session African governments presented a paper on the economic and social crisis facing the continent. Based upon the 1985 priority programme, the paper says that the underlying causes of underdevelopment and economic crisis are the lack of structural transformation and low productivity aggravated by such factors as major disparities in urban and rural development and income distribution, the inadequacy and/or misdirection of resources, poor economic management, inappropriate economic policies, and political instability. External constraints, adds the paper, include the international economic recession, collapsing commodity prices, adverse terms of trade, a real decline in overseas development assistance, increased protectionism, high interest rates, and the heavy burden of debt and debt-servicing obligations of African countries.

In order to ensure success in overcoming Africa's economic problems, the paper proposes that a new set of relationships should be established through which substantial increases in the flow of high concessional resources for Africa from the international community would be strengthened by the growing determination of African peoples and governments to make exceptional sacrifices in mobilising domestic resources and optimising their efficient use. In particular the African countries wish to see effective early warning systems and national food security arrangements to cope with future emergencies, more support for agriculture, and a comprehensive programme to stem the effects of drought and desertification. On economic management they recognise that genuine efforts must be made to improve the performance of public enterprises, to control public expenditure and promote the efficient use of resources, and to encourage the positive role of the private sector.

As for the external factors, African countries would like growth in the world economy, the elimination of protectionist policies by developed countries, fair and remunerative prices for African exports, the conversion of official development assistance (ODA) debts and interest obligations into grants, and the consolidation of non-ODA official debts and service payments into long-term loans repayable on concessional terms.

United Nations Programme of Action

The special session concluded with the adoption of a United Nations action programme for African recovery and development in the period from 1986 to 1990. Noting Africa's commitment to providing the necessary framework for long-term programmes for self-sustaining development and growth, the United Nations document endorses the 1985 African programme and commits other countries to assisting Africa achieve its objectives. It states that the international community should implement policies conducive to sustained, equitable and non-inflationary growth; eliminate protectionism and non-tariff barriers, and provide improved market access for African exports; and deal urgently with commodity issues. Donor countries, while agreeing on the importance of increasing official development assistance to Africa, also accept that greater emphasis should be placed on non-project aid, that multilateral development institutions should increase their concessional assistance, that efforts should be made to ensure that no individual bilateral donor becomes a net recipient of official flows from African countries undertaking adjustment programmes, and that special attention should be given to the requirements of countries affected by drought and desertification.

The international community, the programme states, recognises that a strong economic adjustment effort may not be sufficient to allow many African states to service their debts while establishing the basis for suitable economic growth, and in such cases it is determined to assist African countries in their efforts to deal with their financial constraints.

British Views

Speaking on 28 May, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, told the General Assembly that hunger in Africa had succeeded in touching the consciences of the more fortunate and in releasing a tide of spontaneous generosity. Millions of people

had made their contribution to help the starving in response to the challenges of Live Aid and Sport Aid (see p 189). Governments had to play their part as well and Britain had committed some £189 million for famine relief in Africa over the last two years and was ready to provide further help where it was necessary.

Developed countries, said Sir Geoffrey, had to look beyond emergencies to the longer term and help Africa to help itself. Their policies had sometimes aggravated Africa's problems since pressure from major world food producers to dispose of subsidised surpluses on world markets had discouraged those who could produce food more cheaply, and other restrictions on trade in agricultural products had not helped. Food aid from the surpluses of the developed world had been needed as cereal production in Africa fell, but this was not a solution either to the West's excessive production or to shortages in Africa. The need for change had been recognised within Africa itself where a number of countries were taking steps to establish price and other incentives for farmers, and more efficient food marketing systems. Research capacity was being built up and scientific methods more practically applied. Britain was already helping in many of these areas and was ready to do more.

Noting that there was a growing mood of realism and understanding that mistakes had been made, Sir Geoffrey said that the 1985 priority programme provided convincing evidence of seriousness of approach. Although intelligent long-term planning was rightly seen as a key, a central role for government did not mean huge bureaucracies. Although leaner and more efficient administrations were being allowed to emerge in Africa, management efficiency had to be improved, public spending brought under control and subsidies adjusted. Many African countries were reviewing public investment plans and had recognised the need for a climate favourable to private investment freed of past restrictions.

On the questions of the environment and population growth, Sir Geoffrey pointed out that a lead had to come from governments. A more determined and practical effort was being made to introduce better farming and soil conservation, to rehabilitate forests, and develop more harvesting of timber. Britain was involved in parts of Africa in precisely this kind of endeavour and proposed to do more, and in addition was ready to give any help it could on the problems arising from large population growth.

Sir Geoffrey said that the industrialised countries recognised the importance of maintaining open trading conditions and had made a clear declaration on this at their Tokyo summit (see p 148). They were fully committed to the success of the new round of trade negotiations and at the meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in September would work for early and decisive progress. Concessionary assistance would still be vital from bilateral donors and multilateral institutions, and Britain shared the strong hope that the International Development Association's eighth replenishment of $12,000 million would be achieved. Britain welcomed the new IMF Structural Adjustment Facility (see p 339, 1985) and the closer co-operation between the IMF and the World Bank. These developments, together with the World Bank's Special Facility for Africa (see p 74, 1985), with which Britain was associating a special allocation of its bilateral aid, were a major demonstration of the concern felt for African needs, as had been the outcome of the negotiations on the Third Lomé Convention (see pp 441-3, 1984).

Concluding, Sir Geoffrey emphasised the high priority given to Africa in the allocation of British aid resources: over £500 million had been given through bilateral and multilateral channels in 1985 and Britain would continue to make a substantial effort. Britain was providing substantial sums in non-project aid to countries undertaking programmes of economic reform and, with its partners in Africa, aimed to place more emphasis on a comprehensive approach to particular sectors, especially the development of natural resources and the provision of skilled manpower and training.

On the debt problem Sir Geoffrey pointed out that the management of a country's debt could not realistically be separated from the other elements in its external financial position. Britain saw no alternative but to deal with this issue on an individual basis and through existing international structures. 'Already for the poorest countries our aid does not add to the burden of debt, since it is provided on a grant basis. For 13 African countries we have commuted past aid loans to grants – a total of £250 million.'

British Aid to Africa

In the period from 1980 to 1984 British gross bilateral aid to Africa averaged over £250 million a year. In 1984 it amounted to £266 million, of which £248 million went to countries south of the Sahara. In addition Britain contributes substantial funds to international organisations active in Africa, including the European Community, the World Bank and various United Nations agencies. Projects aided in 1984 included the rehabilitation of the Limpopo railway line in Mozambique (£10 million), the £90 million Songea-Makambako road in Tanzania, and power stations in the Sudan. Others included the rehabilitation of roads and railways in Malawi; the supply of essential agricultural imports, including seeds and fertilisers, to Kenya; and agricultural programmes to help smallholders in southern Sudan. Considerable support for agriculture and natural resources development is also provided by the Commonwealth Development Corporation which in 1985 directed nearly half its investment commitments to projects in Africa (see p 191). An important element of British aid is manpower and training; at the end of 1984 some 1,500 British experts were serving in Africa while nearly 3,000 African students were attending training courses in Britain. In 1986 British assistance has been announced for the rehabilitation of 600 Land Rovers in Malawi (£4·2 million), for rural development in Zimbabwe and Zambia (£13 million), and for the improvement of road/rail communications between Malawi and Tanzania (£10 million).

In 1984 Britain contributed over £81 million to relieve famine in Africa, this rising to £96·5 million in 1985. Expenditure in the first quarter of 1986 was £27 million. Britain is also planning to spend £125 million on longer-term aid to African countries affected by drought and famine.

As a member of the European Community Britain contributes to African development through the Community's assistance programmes. Under the Lomé Convention, which links the Community with all of independent black Africa (plus countries in the Carib-

bean and the Pacific) Britain is contributing about 17 per cent (£740 million) of the Community's aid (about £4,400 million) from the European Development Fund for the period from 1986 to 1990. Within this programme, 90 per cent of which is being allocated to Africa, special priority is being given to agriculture and food production with a view to increasing self-sufficiency in food, raising rural incomes and living standards, developing local processing of agricultural produce, and combating desertification.

Britain is contributing bilateral aid expenditure of £15 million a year for five years from 1985 in close support of the purposes of the World Bank's Special Facility for sub-Saharan Africa established early in 1985 to provide long-term assistance to African countries undertaking policies of structural adjustment.

Many British voluntary organisations are active in Africa, particularly in providing emergency relief. In addition, in July 1985 an international rock concert, organised by the charity Band Aid Trust on behalf of victims of famine in sub-Saharan Africa, took place in Britain and the United States and was televised throughout the world; some £50 million was raised, an estimated £25 million in Britain alone. A Band Aid spin-off, Sport Aid, sponsored simultaneous races in May 1986 in some 55 cities throughout the world in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund; the organisers hope to raise some £60 million.

Britain and South Africa

Britain has joined other nations in condemning attacks by South Africa on targets in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe which took place on 19 May and has reaffirmed its support for the efforts of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons to promote political dialogue in South Africa. It remains opposed, however, to the imposition of economic sanctions, believing that these do not represent an effective means of achieving an end to the continuing violence in South Africa, and, together with the United States, has vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution calling for them.

Background

On 19 May South African defence forces carried out cross-border raids into Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with the declared intention of attacking the centres of operation of the African National Congress (ANC). The attacks on Gaborone, Lusaka and Harare, in which three people were killed and many more injured, were carried out against a background of increasing civil unrest in South Africa and of efforts by the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons, set up at the Commonwealth heads of Government meeting in Nassau in 1985 (see p 343, 1985), to promote a dialogue between the South African Government and representatives of the black community. Following consultations with a number of Southern African leaders, the ANC and the South African Government, the Group is due to report in June to Commonwealth heads of Government. Following the raids, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Sir Shridath Ramphal, issued a statement strongly condemning the South African action and calling for the imposition of economic sanctions as a means of bringing an end to apartheid.

After the raids, the United Nations Security Council met in May to discuss events in Southern Africa in response to requests from Zambia and Senegal. On 23 May, the Council voted on a draft resolution which strongly condemned the attacks and called for selective economic sanctions against South Africa as an effective means of combating the apartheid system and bringing peace and stability to Southern Africa. The draft resolution received 12 votes in favour, Britain and the United States voting against and France abstaining. Britain and the United States vetoed the resolution because of the reference to economic sanctions.

British Views

Prime Minister's Statement

Answering questions in the House of Commons on 20 May (*Hansard*, Vol 98, No 117, cols 175-7), the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, totally condemned the South African attacks and pointed out that Britain's views had been strongly expressed to the South African chargé d'affaires.

Mrs Thatcher said that, while the Commonwealth mission had undoubtedly suffered a setback as a result of what had happened, the Government hoped that it would continue its work as long as there was a possibility of it coming to a successful conclusion. After the raids and in the knowledge of them, the Eminent Persons Group had had a meeting with South African ministers, had left its proposals with them and had discussed the way ahead. Those Commonwealth heads of Government charged with duties in relation to the Group would meet again in London in August to discuss the stage reached by the mission. The British Government wanted to prevent the terrible violence that could take place in South Africa and to do everything possible to assist the Group in carrying out its role.

The Government still believed that it was right to initiate, in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides, a process of dialogue with a view to establishing a non-racial and representative government in South Africa. It was opposed to the imposition of economic sanctions, believing that these and the isolation of South Africa were no more likely to achieve these objectives after the raid than they were before it.

Security Council Statement

Speaking on 23 May, Britain's Permanent Representative, Sir John Thomson, said that Britain shared the outrage of its Commonwealth partners in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe at the South African attacks, which it totally and utterly condemned. South Africa had to take note that Britain would never countenance cross-border violations and South Africa's illegitimate use of force against its neighbours.

The attacks were contrary to the long-term interests of all South Africans, could only deepen South Africa's isolation, and had raised questions of the utmost seriousness which the people of South Africa had to answer. It was difficult to show any understanding for an attack against a refugee camp in Zambia administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or for a raid on Botswana, a country which posed no conceivable threat to South Africa and which maintained minimal armed forces; moreover, the raid had taken place in the middle of discussions between the governments of Botswana and South Africa designed precisely to prevent such occurrences. No one could show understanding of South African complaints about bombs in their country when the South Africans planted them in the neighbouring capital of Harare. Sir John continued: '. . . as recent events within South Africa have so tragically reinforced, violence of this kind begets more violence. The South Africans themselves should recognise that they have more interest than anyone else in promoting peaceful political evolution.'

Questioning further the rationale behind the attacks, Sir John asked how it could possibly make sense for South Africa to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours who, with others, were doing all they could to avert further violence and bloodshed and to promote a process of dialogue which would lead to the end of apartheid in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides. Moreover, those who had ordered the attacks precisely at the time when the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons was travelling on its crucial mission between Lusaka and Cape Town had made a grave miscalculation. Sir John added: 'Time is very short if the Commonwealth initiative is to succeed in its objectives. I hope that the South African Government realise that if they frustrate the Commonwealth's initiative, they can expect no support from any quarter. They must already realise that the British people abhor apartheid. We are willing to help to end it peacefully. But there is a limit to this willingness if the South African Government will not co-operate.'

Change in South Africa would come about principally as a result of the tremendous pressures within, rather than through external sanctions, but those outside South Africa had at the same time an important part to play and should encourage those who were seeking actively to make constructive changes. The objective of Britain's policy was to impress upon the South African Government the urgency and absolute necessity of implementing the five points in the Commonwealth Accord (see pp 344-5, 1985). A great deal remained to be done in a short time if the five points were to be enacted. By its action the South African Government had made the task of the Commonwealth Group much harder. If South Africa had made the attacks with the deliberate intention of undermining the Group, it would find that it had undermined the future of its own people.

Concluding, Sir John urged the South African Government to consider very seriously the consequences, both domestically and internationally, should it not now respond in a positive sense to the Commonwealth Group. The prospects for South Africa would be dismal if it did not assist the success of this major international effort which was designed to promote peaceful and just solutions.

Hong Kong

The Hong Kong (British Nationality) Order 1986, which gives effect to the nationality provisions of the British memorandum associated with the British-Chinese joint declaration on the future of Hong Kong after 1997, was approved by the House of Commons on 13 May.

The Order gives British dependent territories citizens in Hong Kong the right to acquire the status of British national (overseas) and the passport that goes with it, and makes provisions to guard against statelessness. Its main provisions were first outlined in a White Paper published in October 1985 and were subsequently debated in the House of Commons on 16 January (see pp 37-40). During the debate some MPs expressed disquiet regarding the adequacy of some of the provisions, concerning which the Government also received representations from the Hong Kong Legislative and Executive Councils. In particular, the Councils requested that there should be an endorsement in British national (overseas) passports to show that the holder did not require a visa or entry certificate to visit Britain; that former servicemen in Hong Kong who had fought in its interests during the second World War should be granted British citizenship; and that British dependent territories citizens in Hong Kong who were not ethnically Chinese, who had not exercised their right to be British nationals (overseas) and who had no other form of nationality, should be granted British citizenship in 1997 rather than British overseas citizenship.

The Government's response to these requests was outlined by the Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, in a short debate on the Order on 13 May (*Hansard*, Vol 97, No 113, cols 655-75).

Home Secretary's Statement

Referring to the first of these requests, Mr Hurd said that an endorsement would be placed in each British national (overseas) passport stating that the holder would not require an entry certificate or visa to visit Britain. The concern for ex-servicemen[1] would also be met since the Government agreed that any of them could be accepted for settlement in Britain, together with their dependents. The Government's response to these two requests had been welcomed by the unofficial members of the Legislative and Executive Councils.

On the third request Mr Hurd pointed out that the Government fully accepted its commitments to British dependent territories citizens in Hong Kong who were not ethnically Chinese and who could risk statelessness after 1997. It did not, however, believe that the granting of British citizenship was necessary to provide them with the proper measure of security they needed. The problem had been approached with two firm principles in mind. The first was that no British dependent territories citizens should have any reason to fear being stateless in 1997 since they would be provided with British overseas citizenship, a status that would also be given to their children and grandchildren born after 1997. The second was that people

[1]Some 270 people are affected of whom 60 are eligible to apply for registration as British citizens under the 1981 British Nationality Act.

settled in Hong Kong should continue to have the right to live there. No form of British nationality could guarantee this after 1997, but it had been secured through the agreement with China which guaranteed right of abode in Hong Kong for all non-ethnic Chinese who had made it their permanent home. This agreement was binding in international law and, in order to make it binding in local law, the provisions were to be written into the basic law governing the Hong Kong special administrative region. Mr Hurd added: 'Our proposals fully meet our commitments to provide all British dependent territories citizens in Hong Kong with the right to a home, with a clear form of nationality, and with assurances for their children and grandchildren'.

Commenting on the view that, given the circumstances of Hong Kong, it would be prudent to grant these people British citizenship in case circumstances changed and they had to leave, Mr Hurd said that the Government had made it clear that if any British nationals were at any time to come under pressure to leave Hong Kong, it would expect the British Government of the day to consider sympathetically their admission to Britain on a case by case basis.

Commonwealth Development Corporation

The annual report of the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC),[1] published in May, shows that 16 developing countries benefited from £106·4 million in new commitments undertaken by the Corporation in 1985. Actual disbursements amounted to £82·2 million. Investment commitments at the end of the year totalled £907·7 million, of which £279 million was for basic development, including power and water, housing finance and transport; £489·3 million for primary production and processing; and £139·4 million for industry and commerce.

Established in 1948, the CDC is financed largely by loans from the Government and supports economic growth in developing countries by investing in productive enterprises in the public or private sector. It is authorised to operate in 35 Commonwealth and 15 non-Commonwealth countries and in Britain's dependencies, nearly half of its total commitment being in Africa. It undertakes investments either alone or in association with others – in 1985 approximately £300 million was contributed by other bodies and institutions in co-financing projects – and is required to pay its way, thus combining developmental objectives with a broadly commercial approach so as to provide a reasonable rate of return on its investments. In 1986 it expects to have about £100 million available for investment, the greater part of which will come from the recycling of previous loans and reinvestment of net earnings. The value of the Corporation's total commitment by region is shown in the table.

CDC Investments by Area: Total Commitments at end 1985

£ million

Area	
Caribbean and Latin America	128·9
Africa	437·1
South Pacific	102·9
Asia	235·3
Other areas	3·5

The Corporation has always given a strong emphasis in its investments to renewable natural resources, and in 1985 72 per cent of new commitments were made to such projects, including the establishment and maintenance of softwood and hardwood forests, support for sawmilling and units producing eucalyptus oil and woodchips, and the development and cultivation of rubber, oil palm, bananas, coffee, tea, cocoa and cotton. The cultivation of basic food crops such as maize, oilseeds, grain and beans was also supported. Other investments involved the manufacture of aluminium products, polypropylene woven sacks, paper board, beer and soft drinks; the installation of generators and the upgrading of electric power systems; the construction of processing mills; hotel modernisation; and development banking.

In 1985 new commitments in Africa amounted to £47·3 million, some 45 per cent of the total. Prominent among these was a £7·5 million loan plus an equity investment of £1·6 million for a new outgrowers oilseed project in Kenya which, designed to reduce Kenya's dependence on imported vegetable oils, will ultimately involve 30,000 small farmers and 2,000 landowners. Other African projects included additional loans of £11·2 million and £8 million respectively for oil palm and forestry development in the Ivory Coast, and a £9·6 million loan for electric power generation in Uganda. Outside Africa, new £10·15 million equity and £13 million loan commitments were made to a project in Papua New Guinea involving the development of an oil palm estate with a processing factory together with a cocoa estate and a fermentary. CDC has also assumed corporate management responsibility for the project. Other new commitments included a £15 million loan for a smallholders' rubber plantation in Indonesia, which is expected to benefit up to 65,000 families as a result of new plantings, and a £9·6 million loan for an electricity supply project in the Cayman Islands.

It is estimated that, together, the new commitments will create 12,800 permanent jobs, provide a livelihood for 94,200 small farmers, bring under cultivation or rehabilitate some 210,000 hectares, and result in foreign exchange earnings for host countries of at least £270 million annually.

The report notes that an important policy objective is increasing co-operation with British firms in developing countries. The Corporation is stepping up its efforts to draw the attention of British business to its knowledge and experience of operating conditions

[1] *Commonwealth Development Corporation: Report and Accounts 1985.* Available on written request from the Corporation, 33 Hill Street, London W1A 3AR. 0 903799 18 9.

abroad and hopes to see more joint ventures with British firms in the industrial as well as the agricultural sector.

Shorter Notes

THE CROWN AGENTS

The annual report and accounts of the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations, published in May, show that the value of orders placed with the Agents from 47 countries in 1985 was £125 million. The Agents also inspected goods with a value of £219 million and sent 6,000 consignments of goods by sea, and 5,000 by air; managed projects with a total value of nearly £900 million, investment funds totalling £1,200 million, and development aid worth £2,200 million; and provided training to over 400 personnel from 50 countries.

The Agents are a statutory body, which provides financial, professional and commercial services for almost 100 governments and over 300 public authorities and international bodies, including purchasing, shipping and insuring material and equipment; supervision and management of engineering projects; money management and investment; and recruitment, consultancy and training. They provide help in administering Britain's programme of bilateral aid to developing countries and are involved in other countries' bilateral aid programmes as well as those of multilateral agencies.

In 1985 the Agents' income from buying and shipping activities increased by 15 per cent, growth being concentrated in activities funded by international aid. For example the Agents played a major role in the disbursement of programme aid, funded from British bilateral aid, in the Sudan, Uganda and Zambia; and of multilateral aid, including the reconstruction import credit to Ghana funded by the World Bank together with a number of bilateral donors. With world attention focused on the effects of continuing drought and famine in sub-Saharan Africa (see p 187), the Agents were involved in a number of long-term development and rehabilitation projects in Sudan, including provision of a procurement adviser to the Rehabilitation Project Management Unit, the rehabilitation of lorries for food aid transport and of the Gezira Light Railway, and a water supply and sanitation study funded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Source: *Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations.* Annual Report and Accounts 1985. Available unpriced from the Crown Agents, St Nicholas House, St Nicholas Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1EL.

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT FUND

Britain is to contribute some £95·08 million to the Asian Development Fund, the concessional lending arm of the Asian Development Bank, for commitments during the four years from 1987 to 1990, this being part of a total fourth replenishment of $3,600 million. Negotiations were successfully concluded on 28 and 29 April in Manila just before the annual meeting of the Bank's board of governors.

The Asian Development Bank came into operation in 1966 with headquarters in Manila, Philippines. It was set up to promote economic and social development by lending funds and providing technical cooperation to the developing member countries of Asia and the Pacific. Britain is one of the original members of the Bank, which now has 31 regional members and 14 non-regional members. The Asian Development Fund was set up in 1974 as the prime source for concessional lending. Before the latest replenishment Britain had committed a total of £167 million to the Fund and its predecessors, including £71·9 million to the third replenishment.

Negotiations for the fourth replenishment began in 1985 and involved 18 developed member countries of the Bank, including Britain, and two developing countries. The total of funds pledged was at the upper end of the final negotiating range and reflected the contributors' view of the needs of the poorer countries of the Asian and Pacific regions. By the end of 1985 the Fund and its predecessors had committed a cumulative total of $11,949 million for 426 loans, of which $5,480 million had been disbursed. Some 50 per cent was committed for agriculture and agro-industry; 22 per cent for energy; 10 per cent each for industry/non-fuel minerals and social infrastructure; and 7 per cent for transport and communications.

Source: Overseas Development Administration press notice, 14.5.86.

ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

Oil and the Economy

Britain has been able to cope with the collapse of the oil price – 'the major event of 1986' – the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Nigel Lawson, said in a speech on 28 May. As oil accounted for only a small proportion of Britain's national output, he expected the gains from cheaper oil to outweigh the losses. In the long term, Britain would have time to adjust to the decline in oil production as this would be spread over a number of years.

Initial Impact

The Chancellor, who was speaking in London to the Association of Economic Representatives, said that Britain had 'weathered the initial storm' of the decline in the oil price (the price per barrel having fallen from about $30 in November 1985 to around $10 in April 1986, recovering to some $14 by late May). Short-term interest rates had been raised for a brief period but were now well below their levels at the turn of the year. Although the Government had lost about £5,500 million in prospective oil revenues in 1986-87, it had, Mr Lawson recalled, been able to cut taxes slightly in the last Budget (see p 120) while adhering closely to the medium-term financial strategy (see p 121).

Short-term Prospects

The Chancellor acknowledged that the fall in the oil price, while itself not a disaster, had coincided with a slowing in growth in Britain and the other major industrialised countries. This did not, he stressed, mean that the recovery in Britain was coming to an end; some pause in growth was to be expected if only because fluctuations were a fact of life. What was happening was that Britain was reaping the benefits of the oil price fall in reducing inflation[1] before the benefits in raising output. Oil producers might have been more prompt in cutting back their spending than oil consumers in increasing theirs. Also, while lower oil prices meant higher real disposable incomes for oil consumers, the initial impact might take the form of a rise in savings rather than in spending.

Mr Lawson said that he still expected the gains gradually to outweigh the losses. Britain and other industrialised countries had experienced a fall in inflation, which had meant a rise in real incomes and hence in the spending power of individuals and companies. Lower inflation, added to falling interest rates and a more realistic pattern of exchange rates, meant that the forces were present to 'sustain a vigorous resumption of growth in this country as well as in the major oil-consuming nations – growth in the private sector, not an artificial and short-lived stimulus provided by the public sector'.

Importance of Oil to Britain

The Chancellor went on to say that the effects of changes in the oil price were largely self-cancelling in Britain, which, as well as being the world's fifth largest oil producer, was also a major consumer; even before the price fall, oil had accounted for only about 5 per cent of national output. Britain stood to lose from a lower value of net oil exports but to gain from improved world economic activity and lower inflation.

Britain operated the fairest oil regime in the world, Mr Lawson declared. It was one in which companies rather than governments decided how much to produce. The Government had made it clear that this would continue.

The Government did not believe that it would be in the interests of Britain or the world to curb British oil production in an attempt to keep the price artificially high. Nor did it believe in interfering in the commercial judgment of professional North Sea operators. Therefore, there never had been any question of British membership of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Also, with the marginal costs of production of North Sea oil being substantially below current price levels and among the lowest outside the Middle East, there was no possibility of production being endangered by the price fall.

The decline would be expected to lead to a change in the balance of activity in Britain. Manufacturing would benefit at the expense of non-manufacturing as the reduction in energy costs and in the real exchange rate improved profitability and altered the composition of demand in favour of manufactures.

Long-term Prospects

The Chancellor expressed optimism about Britain's ability to adjust to the fall in oil production. Britain had been producing almost no oil in 1975 but had attained self-sufficiency five years later; this was likely to continue until well into the 1990s. Even after Britain became a net oil importer again, the fall in production was likely to be spread over several years.

Two major adjustments – to the Government's finances and the balance of payments – would be needed as production declined. Provided that public expenditure continued to be controlled, replacing oil revenues over a 25-year period should not prove a major problem. The necessary adjustment to the balance of payments was also manageable. As net exports

[1]By April the annual inflation rate, as measured by the retail prices index, was 3 per cent, the lowest since early 1968.

of oil fell, other components of the current account of the balance of payments would need to improve. This would, however, be a gradual adjustment whose success depended on the Government's ability to create the conditions in which the private sector could adjust.

The key to successful adjustment was a flexible and responsive economy. Inflexible economies reacted slowly and painfully to change. Inflexibility had been at the heart of most of Britain's past problems and was a major reason why unemployment had risen so sharply and had remained high for such a long time. The only long-term answer was to give priority to removing structural rigidities and making markets work better (see pp 43-6, 1985). The Government had done this through, for example, its privatisation programme (see pp 154-6) and changes in trade union legislation (see p 126, 1985). These measures had been supported by efforts to improve the level of training in the workforce (see pp 124-8, 1985), to encourage the growth of small businesses and self-employment (see pp 390-1, 1985) and to remove unnecessary regulations and other burdens on business (see below). However, the most pressing need was for increased flexibility in costs, especially pay; management had to bring sufficient discipline to the process of pay bargaining.

Business Deregulation

A White Paper on measures to reduce the burdens on businesses that result from unnecessary governmental regulation was published on 22 May. It lists some 80 specific measures which have already been implemented and proposes a further 80 measures. It also describes the machinery which has been set up within government to review the effects of existing regulations and assess the likely impact of new ones.

The White Paper[1] partly constitutes a review of progress made on proposals published in an earlier White Paper, *Lifting the Burden*, in July 1985 (see pp 272-3, 1985). Both White Papers stem from the report of a scrutiny team on burdens on business set up by the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, in August 1984 (see pp 128-9, 1985).

Ministerial Statement

Statements on the White Paper were made by the Secretary of State for Employment, Lord Young, both in a press notice and in Parliament on 22 May (*Hansard* (*HL*), Vol 475, No 98, cols 398-400).

He said that the Government recognised the need to help people in business to develop their enterprises and create jobs, by removing unnecessary, inhibiting regulations. Many regulations were essential, of course, and protected vital aspects of society and the environment. These protections would be maintained; but the Government was seeking to tilt the balance of advantage away from bureaucracy and towards business. Improvements in the ways in which government departments communicated with business were as important, from this point of view, as deregulation.

Among the more important of the new measures outlined in *Building Businesses . . . Not Barriers* was the system of liaison which had been agreed between the central deregulation task force and other government departments, Lord Young said (see p 195).

Other proposed measures included:

—allowing a somewhat wider range of changes of use of buildings or land to take place without planning permission;

—allowing businesses to be given planning permission for two or more alternative uses, so that they could change between uses without the need for further planning application;

—setting up a major review of the effects of value added tax (VAT) on small businesses, taking into account such issues as accounting for VAT on a cash basis rather than using invoices and the introduction of an instalment system for VAT payments;

—introducing a more personal approach by civil servants in their dealings with business, so that responsibility would be linked to individual officials;

—and reducing the duplication of visits by various tax and national insurance officials.

White Paper

The White Paper contrasts the growth in unemployment in Europe over the last decade with the experience of the United States which has seen a considerable growth in new employment over the same period. This, it says, is attributable to the 'more entrepreneurial society' of the United States, and to 'a freedom from regulations that is foreign to most Europeans'. While industrialised societies need regulation, to ensure public safety, provide a framework for industrial relations, protect individuals from health and safety hazards at work and protect the environment, the energies of business people can all too often be diverted away from the creation of wealth by regulations which are too complex or obsolete, or both. The Government's policy is to balance the needs of employment against the other needs and concerns of society; and at the moment the scales are still tipped too far against enterprise. The Government's aim is to alter the balance while avoiding a free-for-all approach.

The need to cut red tape is seen to be particularly important in the case of people starting new firms and taking on their first employees. New business start-ups are the essential source of jobs for the future and government should seek to ease the task, not add to it. A more insidious effect of state controls is that 'regulations and licences tend to build up a cosy industry insulated from outside competition'. New growth is stifled and the consumer suffers. 'State control breeds corpulent firms.'

The White Paper notes that other countries in Europe are taking steps to lessen the burdens imposed by their own national regulations on businesses, and welcomes the recognition which the Commission of the European Community has accorded to the issue following the British Government's initiative last December (see p 6).

[1] *Building Businesses . . . Not Barriers.* Cmnd 9794. HMSO, £6·50. ISBN 0 10 197940 1.

Better Regulation

Better regulation can be achieved in a number of ways, ranging from straightforward abolition (and replacement, perhaps, by a voluntary code of practice) to simplifying the forms and procedures of regulation, providing better information about how rules are to be understood and improving enforcement. The White Paper faces the fact, however, that in some cases there may be an awkward choice between lifting a burden and imposing another policy of government. In each such case it is the impact on employment, on the cost to enterprise, that must be considered. This will not be easy: it will represent 'a profound change of culture for government departments'. It has never previously been the policy aim of a single department to reduce the burden on business; and as a consequence regulatory policies have been pursued without any thought of the sheer mass of regulations descending on the shoulders of business, and of the effects on employment, costs and efficiency. 'It is the cumulative effect of many small regulations which weighs business down.' The Government's deregulation policy marks a significant break with that tradition, the White Paper says.

Arrangements for Reducing Burdens on Business

The arrangements proposed in *Lifting the Burden* for monitoring and reviewing regulations are now in place. A central task force, the Enterprise and Deregulation Unit (EDU), is located in the Department of Employment and reports directly to the Secretary of State for Employment, Lord Young. (*Lifting the Burden* proposed that the central task force should be within the Cabinet Office and report to Lord Young, who was then Minister without Portfolio, but this plan was changed following Lord Young's appointment as Secretary of State in September 1985.) Meanwhile deregulation units have been set up within individual departments and report to departmental ministers. An annex to the White Paper describes in detail how the EDU and departmental deregulation units are to work together and provides guidelines for the operation of departmental units.

The EDU has been set up initially for a three-year period and its future will be reviewed at the end of the period. Its staff are drawn from government departments and from business, mainly on short secondments. 'The EDU acts in some sense as a proxy for the voice of business within Whitehall and considers departments' proposals from the viewpoint of business.' It can call upon the experience of the Advisory Panel on Deregulation, a group of nine businessmen.

Proposals for new regulations or amendments to existing regulations are assessed for the costs they put on business. The White Paper sets out a seventeen-point checklist, agreed between the EDU and departments, which can be used to analyse the costs and benefits of proposed regulatory change. Existing regulations are being reviewed to identify whether they can be changed or abolished. The means of enforcing regulation through licensing are also being reviewed, as is the way in which departments communicate with business and train their officials. Statistical demands made by government on business are being subjected to review and cost-benefit analysis in the same way as the regulatory burden.

Proposals for Deregulation

Examples of some of the 80 or so proposals for further deregulation (excluding those cited by Lord Young on p 194) are given below:

—publishing a consultation paper on possible changes to simplify and improve the development plan system;

—reviewing the procedures for VAT registration and deregistration;

—simplifying stamp duty procedures to exempt many documents from the need for stamping;

—simplifying procedures for calculating capital allowances on machinery and plant with short economic lives;

—publishing a short and simple leaflet about tax for people setting up in business;

—updating and revising the Employers' Guide to PAYE[1];

—considering action to deter ill-founded claims of unfair dismissal through the possible introduction of a fee for employees (returnable in most cases) before taking a case to an industrial tribunal;

—extending from six months to two years the qualifying period after which employers are required to give a detailed statement of reasons for dismissal;

—exempting firms with fewer than 20 employees from the requirement to provide staff with a written statement on disciplinary and grievance procedures;

—restricting the existing wide range of industrial relations duties for which time off with pay must be allowed to the scope of trade union recognition by the employer;

—raising the hours of work thresholds above which employees qualify for the main employment rights;

—reducing enquiries of employers about the earnings and employment records of their employees;

—combining maternity allowance with maternity pay;

—simplifying the form and content of small company accounts;

—exploring the scope for making it easier for companies to disincorporate and become sole traders or partnerships;

—consulting on the amount of information companies are required to file with the company registration offices;

—considering the abolition of the rule which requires registered companies to specify in excessive detail the range of their activities;

—reviewing the export licensing system and its effect on business;

—considering further improvements in the goods vehicle operator licensing system;

—reviewing how the Civil Aviation Authority is organised to operate certain controls and services;

—considering the replacement of merchant shipping regulations with codes of practice wherever possible;

—reviewing all Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods licences by the end of 1986.

[1]Pay as You Earn, the name for the system under which most employees pay income tax.

Nuclear Energy

The Government's continuing commitment to the safe development of nuclear power was reaffirmed in a debate on nuclear energy in the House of Commons on 13 May. Britain is playing a full part in international discussions following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station (see pp 141-3), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has formulated an outline programme to improve co-operation on nuclear safety.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

The debate (*Hansard*, Vol 97, No 112, cols 568-654) took place on a number of civil nuclear matters, and a motion was passed by 340 votes to 205 welcoming the steps taken by the Government to keep the public informed of the consequences for Britain of the Soviet nuclear accident, endorsing the Government's commitment to the safety of the nuclear fuel cycle in Britain, and approving the Government's initial response to the House of Commons Environment Committee's report on radioactive waste (for publication details of the latter report see p 134). In its response, published on 2 May,[1] the Government welcomed the Committee's conclusions that safe disposal routes were available in Britain and that indefinite storage presented unacceptable risks. However, it found no scientific grounds for restricting, as the Committee had recommended, the radioactive waste that might be disposed of into a near-surface facility, but, in view of the concern expressed, it had agreed that only low-level waste would be disposed of at any near-surface facility developed by the Nuclear Industry Radioactive Waste Executive (NIREX). The Government strongly supported the Committee's objective that the disposal of radioactive waste should be subject to stringent control. The initial response was issued in the context of the Government's proposal to lay a Special Development Order before Parliament to give planning permission for NIREX to investigate four possible disposal sites (see p 98); a full response will be issued later in 1986. Approval for the Special Development Order was given in the House of Commons on 21 May (*Hansard*, Vol 98, No 119, cols 457-502) when an Opposition motion to annul the Order was defeated by 244 votes to 166.

Government View

In opening the debate on 13 May, the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr Kenneth Baker, referred to the monitoring arrangements in operation which confirmed the very low level of exposure of people in Britain to the radioactive cloud emitted into the atmosphere from the Chernobyl accident on 26 April. However, he said that the accident would have 'a profound effect on public opinion and on the assessment of nuclear power', and it had underlined 'the heavy responsibilities that go with nuclear power'. He wished to draw a number of lessons from the incident.

First, nuclear accidents could have an international impact and each country with a nuclear programme had a responsibility to ensure that it was regulated properly and safely, and a responsibility to ensure that, if an incident occurred, information was passed to and, where necessary, help sought rapidly from other countries. He welcomed the agreement reached at the Tokyo economic summit (see p 142) to recommend that an international convention be drawn up which would commit the parties to report and exchange information in the event of a nuclear emergency.

Secondly, trust had to be built as there were a number of issues surrounding the subject of nuclear energy which aroused considerable passion. On the one hand, nuclear electricity provided 'secure supplies and some environmental advantages', while, on the other hand, if a serious accident occurred, results were 'far more serious than in most other industries'. The Government continued to believe that, as the industry was subject to the most stringent safeguards, nuclear generation had 'an essential contribution to make to the provision of electric power'. However, safety had to be 'the supreme consideration, particularly in design, in operation and in disposal'.

Thirdly, openness was essential, and the arrangements were already more open than was necessary, but where public safety and assurance were involved, improvements had always to be looked for. He noted that Britain's nuclear industry was already subject to 15 Acts of Parliament and sets of regulations; and in England to the scrutiny of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, the Radiochemical Inspectorate and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, with similar arrangements in Scotland and Wales. If an incident at a civil nuclear establishment should occur, there were clear guidelines on what should be reported and how such incidents should be handled. Reports were required 'as quickly as possible – normally within 24 hours', and all incidents involving death, serious injury, substantial over-exposure to radiation or a release of radioactivity that required special action were reported to ministers, as well as to local liaison committees, local residents and the workforce. Reports to ministers were published each quarter by the Health and Safety Executive. In addition, there were arrangements for other incidents to be reported to the appropriate departments which had inspectorates to monitor operations and to ensure that the terms of authorisations for discharge or disposal of waste were being complied with. On minor incidents he had given instructions within the Department of the Environment that ministers should be told of all incidents involving the release of radioactivity, however small, so that they could decide whether the incident was sufficiently important for the information to be made public.

Disposal of Radioactive Waste

Mr Baker said that the amount of radioactive waste expected to arise by the year 2000 was 'not large compared with the amounts of waste generated by other industries' (approximately 350,000 cubic metres[1] of low-level waste, rising to 1·2 million cubic metres by 2030). Nevertheless, there was a responsibility to ensure its safe disposal and this responsibility should not be left to later generations. The present national site for low-level radioactive waste disposal, at Drigg (Cumbria), would be full by about 2010, even assuming that available techniques for waste compaction were in use by 1987 and that it proved

[1]Department of the Environment press notice, 2.5.86.

[1]1 cubic metre = 35·3 cubic feet.

possible to develop the whole of the existing site. It was prudent to press ahead with investigating another site, given the time needed for examination, consultation and development. Accordingly, he had published the draft of the Special Development Order to enable NIREX to investigate sites for the shallow disposal of radioactive waste in clay (see p 98). Planning permission would only enable NIREX to investigate the geology and hydrogeology of the four sites at Bradwell (Essex), Elstow (Bedfordshire), Fulbeck (Lincolnshire) and South Killingholme (Humberside), and there was no presumption that any of these would ultimately be developed. It was NIREX's responsibility to assess the information obtained and then decide whether it wished to make a formal planning application. Any application would be subject to a planning inquiry under an independent inspector, and the Government was determined that at each stage there should be the maximum opportunity for consultation with those who might be affected. The Government had made a number of detailed changes to the Order and had also decided to limit the waste that would be deposited there to broadly low-level waste.

Mr Baker said that intermediate-level radioactive waste would be stored pending the identification and development of a deep disposal site (either in a mine-shaft or under the sea) or until the radioactivity had fallen sufficiently to enable its disposal as low-level waste. He re-emphasised the importance of safety, not only in the operation of nuclear installations but also in radioactive waste disposal, and said that the Government remained 'committed to the safe development of nuclear power and the disposal of all radioactive waste'.

Opposition Views

For the Labour Party, its chief spokesman on the environment, Dr John Cunningham, said that the nuclear industry had suffered from regular changes of policy and there was 'a lack of any coherent strategy'. The Government had failed to develop an acceptable national policy for the storage and monitoring of nuclear waste, while the policy on discharges into the environment had also been unacceptable. Although it might be argued that the industry had an outstanding safety record, that alone was insufficient. It was essential that the safety, health and environment of people in Britain should be safeguarded by standards of scrutiny set far higher than for any other industry. It was necessary that the Government 'should use all means available to secure international application of the highest known safety standards and management systems'. He criticised the Government's arrangements for responding to the radioactive fallout in Britain arising from Chernobyl and believed that there was 'a need to review comprehensively existing procedures and contingency plans for dealing with such incidents'.

For the Liberal Party, its energy spokesman, Mr Malcolm Bruce, said that the nuclear industry had been unable to develop acceptable ways of disposing of nuclear waste, which was sufficient to justify the view that there should be no further expansion of the nuclear power programme while the problem remained unresolved. He said that, in spite of ample warning of the drift of the radioactive cloud from Chernobyl, the Government had been inadequately prepared, while the public had been confused by the Government's utterances. He questioned the need for nuclear power and said that investment in energy efficiency, improvements to the environmental acceptability and the efficiency of coal and oil, and the development of alternative energy sources could meet all Britain's energy needs and would allow for the gradual changeover to a non-nuclear energy position.

Government Response

Replying for the Government, the Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Peter Walker, rejected the criticisms raised over the monitoring and provision of information relating to the radioactive fallout in Britain. He said that ministers had acted quickly to ensure that the necessary monitoring was undertaken. It was right that the Secretary of State for the Environment had led the government team responsible for the monitoring, while the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, with its expertise in identifying radiation levels on land and at sea, had started its operations as soon as it had knowledge of the accident and the Health and Safety Executive had joined in to ensure that all necessary measures had been taken. Unlike other countries, responsibilities for inspection rested with a range of departments, which was a wise approach.

Mr Walker said that, of all the known sources of energy, nuclear energy was the one most likely to be 'an absolute necessity in the twenty-first century', provided that it could be safely produced. Looking at available fossil fuels, it appeared that, if energy supplies were to be held at current levels, by the year 2025 a ninefold increase in nuclear energy worldwide would be needed, even after taking into account all the conservation measures that could be adopted. However, the Government had 'correctly decided to take great care before making any decisions on a nuclear reactor'. It was awaiting the report of the inspector, expected in September 1986, into the Central Electricity Generating Board's proposal to build a pressurised water reactor at Sizewell (Suffolk) which had been examined at a public inquiry. The Government would also study what happened in the IAEA as a result of the accident in the Soviet Union, and would then carefully discuss and debate the potential of nuclear energy in the future.

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

During an adjournment debate in the House of Commons on 23 May (*Hansard*, Vol 98, No 120, cols 659-70), the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Alastair Goodlad, referred to the international discussions which had followed the accident at Chernobyl. He said that the concern raised by the accident had led to calls for 'closer international co-operation in the IAEA framework including the establishment of an international mechanism for early warning and mutual assistance in the event of any future accidents'. The Government fully supported these objectives and Britain was 'playing its full part in international discussions and actions'.

Mr Goodlad said that at the request of the Federal Republic of Germany an emergency meeting of the board of governors of the IAEA on 21 May had discussed the accident at Chernobyl, its consequences, the measures initiated and further measures which the IAEA might take to improve international co-operation on the safety of nuclear installations. With Britain's

full support, an outline programme with two main elements had been drawn up. First, it would involve the establishment of expert groups to draft two binding international conventions: one (to which Britain attached the highest priority) on the reporting and exchange of information on nuclear accidents with possible transboundary effects; and one on co-ordinated emergency response and assistance in the event of such nuclear accidents. All the board members had confirmed that, even before these conventions entered force, their governments would immediately inform potentially affected countries, the IAEA and other appropriate international organisations in the event of a significant release of radioactivity within their territory. Secondly, there would be a conference of governmental representatives to review all nuclear safety issues in the light of the Chernobyl accident. An expert group had been set up to consider additional measures in the long term to improve co-operation on nuclear safety.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Sex Discrimination Bill

The Sex Discrimination Bill, which has received its second reading in the House of Commons, is designed to bring British law into line with the European Community directive on equal treatment and to remove sex discrimination in certain other areas of Britain's employment legislation. The Government is to include a new clause in the Bill at committee stage to give men and women doing similar work the right to retire at the same age.

Main Provisions of the Bill

In 1983 the European Court of Justice ruled that the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 failed to fully implement the European Community equal treatment directive. The Act, therefore, needed to be amended in a number of ways to ensure that British law complied with the directive. At present, private households and businesses with five or fewer employees are exempted from a requirement of the 1975 Act not to discriminate between the sexes in employment practices. The new Bill provides for a more limited exemption for private households, while maintaining the principle of respect for private life. The exemption enjoyed by firms employing five or fewer people would be removed. There is also a provision in the Bill outlawing discriminatory elements in collective agreements, internal rules of undertakings and rules governing independent occupations and professions.

Under the Bill, legal restrictions would be lifted on women's hours of work which prevent them from working shifts and at night, stipulate the maximum number of hours that they may work and curtail overtime working. In the light of this proposed change, the Baking Industry (Hours of Work) Act 1954, which imposes restrictions on night baking by men, would be repealed to make sure that there would be no discrimination against men.

The Government intends to make a major addition to the Bill in committee. In a judgment given in February, the European Court of Justice stated that it was an act of sex discrimination if an employer dismissed a woman solely because she had reached a state pensionable age which was different for women and men. Under the Sex Discrimination Bill, women would have the right to continue working until the same age as men in those occupations that at present have different retirement ages for men and women. This change would not, however, affect rights of access to occupational or state pensions (see p 132).

Parliamentary Debate

The Bill was given a second reading in the House of Commons on 22 May by 155 votes to 68 (*Hansard*, Vol 98, No 119, cols 569-626).

Government View

Opening the debate, the Paymaster General and Minister for Employment, Mr Kenneth Clarke, said that the Government was genuinely committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment for men and women and to eliminating all unreasonable discrimination on the grounds of sex. This commitment was, he said, consistent with the Government's general aim of improving the flexibility of the labour market. The removal of barriers which hindered either men or women from making their full contribution to the economy would mark a significant step towards the achievement of greater efficiency, competitiveness and prosperity.

Opposition View

Speaking for the official Opposition, Ms Jo Richardson said that the Labour Party welcomed in principle the provisions of the Bill designed to bring the Sex Discrimination Act into line with the European Community ruling, but would not support the Bill since it failed to apply the Act effectively to collective agreements and would remove protective legislation rather than extend it equally to men and women.

Shorter Notes

IMMIGRATION RULES: CHILD SPOUSES

The Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, laid before Parliament on 22 May an amendment to the Immigration Rules which is designed to prevent child spouses under 16 living in the United Kingdom. The change gives effect to the commitment by the Government to amend the Immigration Rules following concern earlier this year about the admission of child brides. As a result of the change, which came into effect on 23 May, it will not be possible for a spouse under 16 who is subject to immigration control to enter or remain in the United Kingdom on the basis of marriage to someone permanently resident or working or studying here. Previously a spouse of any age who had contracted a valid marriage overseas could qualify

for admission if the marriage was recognised in the United Kingdom.

Sources: *Statement of Change in Immigration Rules.* HMSO, 45p. ISBN 0 10 230686 9; Home Office press notice, 22.5.86.

NEW TRANSPORT COMMITTEE TO HELP DISABLED AND ELDERLY PEOPLE

The establishment of a Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee to advise the Department of Transport on all aspects of transport and mobility for disabled people was announced on 22 May. The Committee, whose members have been drawn from a wide range of transport and disability interests and half of whom are themselves disabled, will report annually to the Secretary of State.

Welcoming the appointment, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport, Mr Peter Bottomley, said that the Committee would help the Department to build on its firm commitment in identifying and providing for the transport needs of disabled people. One of the Committee's immediate priorities would be to look at the design of buses and at problems of access to bus services for elderly and disabled people.

Local authorities and transport operators throughout the country would welcome the advice and guidance of the Committee in helping them to fulfil their duty, under the Transport Act 1985, towards disabled people. It was often not a lack of willingness but a lack of guidance that had prevented authorities and operators from being more active in helping disabled and elderly people use buses and other forms of public transport.

Source: Department of Transport press notice, 22.5.86.

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Women in Development and the British Aid Programme. This booklet deals with the role that women play in development and gives details about some of the British aid projects which involve or affect women. Available free on request from Information Department, Overseas Development Administration, Eland House, Stag Place, London SW1E 5DH.

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Bank of England Report and Accounts 1986. Available unpriced from the Bank at Threadneedle Street, London EC2R 8AH.

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Exploitable Areas of Science. A report by the Advisory Council for Applied Research and Development which recommends the establishment of a process for identifying exploitable areas of science in Britain. A firm of

consultants has been appointed to advise on the best way to establish the process, which the Council considers should be independent of the Government. HMSO, £4·90. ISBN 0 11 630827 3.

Report of the Working Party on the Private Sector Funding of Scientific Research. A report by a working party established by the Advisory Board for the Research Councils which identifies considerable scope for the private sector to jointly fund projects with the five government-funded research councils and with higher education institutions. Available unpriced from the Department of Education and Science Publications Despatch Centre, Honeypot Lane, Canons Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ.

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Conservation and Development: The British Approach. A report published in response to the World Conservation Strategy, setting out the Government's approach to environmental issues. Available from the Department of the Environment, Publications Sales Unit, Building 1, Victoria Road, South Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 0NZ. £16.

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